

JODY TURNER (Rock Goddess); pic by Robert Ellis

ROCK GODDESS!

DIO!
RODS!
SAMSON!
ACID!
MAMAS
BOYS!
HEAVY
LOAD!
FRANK
MARINO!

**BONNET
BARES ALL!**

**Exclusive
Interview**





■ **Girlschool** certainly seemed to have had fun on their recent tour of Yugoslavia! In particular, the citizens of Belgrade won't forget 'em in a hurry. It seems that the band contrived to get stuck in a lift at their hotel, whilst on the way to the local gig. The locals took nearly an hour to finally extricate 'em from their dire straits, by which time, the foursome had consumed two litres of native wine!

But, that was just the beginnings of their troubles. For after the concert, the band made their weary way to a local restaurant-cum-video club, where Kim McAuliffe proceeded to break her brand new tooth-caps on a particular hard piece of steak. Finally, having had enough of Slavic hospitality, the band decided to up and leave, taking with 'em a whole bevy of rather impressive wine glasses, stuffed in their bags.

Unfortunately, what they didn't know was that all these souvenir-perloping activities were being filmed by hidden cameras, and then put on video screens for all and sundry at the club to watch! Needless to say, the girls have no immediate plans to issue this video for commercial consumption!

■ In the wake of **Phil Collen's** emergence with **Def Leppard**, and **Phil Lewis** donning flying ace gear with **Air Race**, two more former **Girl Stalwarts** have now come back into the limelight. Guitarist **Garry Laffy** is now making a major feature film in Australia, whilst his bass-toting brother, **Simon**, has joined up with London band **Atlantis**, said to be a British equivalent to **Loverboy**.

■ Contrary to the impression we gave in our recent **Def Leppard** interview, keyboards player **Tony Kaye** DOES appear on some of the tracks on 'Pyromania' – five of 'em to be precise. Hope this snippet of info clears the air.

■ Nightwing bassist **Gordon Rowley** has been at it again! The man who's made quite a name for himself through working with the rehabilitation of alcoholics was recently involved in a car-crash in Los Angeles. Not as a participant, mark you, but in the role of life-saving hero of the moment. For, whilst others stood by and watched after a souped-up US vehicle had collided with a lamp-post, Rowley waded in and cut loose the driver – using just his bare hands. When finally an ambulance trolled up to take the injured to hospital, it was found that Rowley, in undertaking his life-saving activity had severely damaged his arm, necessitating immediate treatment. Why was Mr. Rowley in LA? Mixing Nightwing's latest elpee, 'Stand Up & Be Counted', obviously a title the former Strife man takes very much to heart.

■ Following on from their recent performances in Britain, those Danish demon-slicers **Mercyful Fate** are now busily ensconced in a Dutch recording studio working on material for their first, full LP. This is to be released through **Rave-On Records**, the Dutch label responsible for putting out their 'Corpse Without A Soul' a mini-album last year. As yet a title for said vinyl opus hasn't been chosen, although we understand 'Exploding Nuns' is a possibility!

■ Doing their good samaritan bit, the **Church** and **Rose Tattoo** recently gave their services free to perform a concert in Australia, the proceeds from which went to the victims of Australia's forest fire disaster.

■ After **Motley Crue's** successful appearance in **Oui** magazine a couple of months ago, Canadian chanteuse **Lee Aaron** is all set to spread across the pages of this most artistic (?) publication in their March edition. But, there's no need to wait until then, 'cos we've got a full-page colour photo of the young lady in this very issue.

■ As you no doubt have read elsewhere, the much-mooted glam rock festival in Salford has now been postponed. The official reason for this, according to organiser **Warren Heighway** is a lack of headlining acts. "Everyone we approached was either in the studio or out of the country." It's hoped that the event will now be held sometime in May. So, just watch! this page for more info, as and when we get it.

■ **Raven's** third LP should now be in the shops by May. That's official. Entitled, as we pointed out in the last issue, 'Athletic Rock', it has been recorded in Cologne at **Dieter Dierks** studio, with co-production by **Michael Wagener** (who worked on the **Accept** 'Restless & Wild' set) and **Udo Dirkschneider**, who it seems has now quit his vocalist role with **Accept**.

■ The **Marquee Club** in London celebrates its 25th anniversary in April, making it the longest-running rock venue of all time. Of course, the club don't plan to let this event pass by without some form of small (!) celebration. A special series of one-night stands is being planned for April, with many top-line names who appeared at the venue early in their careers, making the nostalgic trip back.

The event will also be marked by a two hour-long BBC TV documentary (for broadcast in the spring), an hour retrospective on **Radio One**, a series of live broadcasts from the club on **Capital Radio** between April 11-14, and a souvenir brochure/book. On top of all this, a special four-album set of recordings made at the **Marquee** during the last quarter-century, is to be released by **Mean Records**.



■ It seems that **UFO** have reached the end of the road. As has been reported elsewhere in the press **Phil Mogg** collapsed on-stage in Greece during a show, suffering from nervous exhaustion, a condition that eye witnesses had seen developing for some little time on this European tour.

As a result, the band were forced to return to England, cancelling a number of continental dates on the way. However, the UK tour is still, at the time of going to press, definitely ON, although **UFO's** record label, **Chrysalis**, have announced they will split up after this. So, in the wake of **Gillan** and **Thin Lizzy**, yet another major name has got into the 'farewell tour' business!

Just what will happen to the various members of **UFO** remains uncertain at present, although it has been rumoured that **Neil Carter** actually telegraphed **Ozzy** in the States offering his services. However, the **Ozz**-man rejected this offer of help.

■ Watch out for **Mendes Prey** making their television debut on March 28. It's on a programme called 'Bubbling Under' (screened by **BBC North**) and features the band in concert at **Leeds University**. It may not turn 'em into instant stars, but even **Ken Barlow** had to begin somewhere!

■ **Newcastle heavies Hellenbach** have just released their first LP. It's called 'Now Hear This', and has been put out by **Neat**. So if track titles like 'Dancin'', 'All Systems Go', and 'Motivated By Desire' take your fancy, you know what to do about it!

■ The march of the progs continues unbalanced! **Charisma** have now made a vast selection from their back-catalogue in this area available on double-play cassettes. Among those legends to get this treatment are **Genesis**, **Steve Hackett**, **Van Der Graaf Generator**, **Peter Dinklage**, **Nice**, and **Rick Wakeman**.

■ **Brummie** rockers **Quartz** (who, in their time have released vinyl on **Jet**, **Logo**, **Readington's Rare**, and **MCA**) have now signed to **Heavy Metal Records**. The band (featuring original members **Mal Cope** and **Mick Hopkins**, plus 'new' boys **Stephen McLoughlin** and **Geoffrey Bate**) are currently recording an LP at **Metrosound Studios** in the midlands. It's entitled 'Against All The Odds', and is to be issued within the next few weeks.

■ The latest technological breakthrough in the world of sound, the compact disc, boasts some 200 titles available in the first batch of releases, including at the heavy end – **Genesis**, **Rush**, **Q**, **Toto**, and **Quarterflash**. The discs will retail at around £9.99p, and should be in the shops by the end of March.

■ **Steve Hackett** will be releasing his sixth solo LP on March 31. Entitled 'Highly Strung', it features (aside from Hackett on vocals/guitar), **Nick Magnus** on keyboards, and **Ian Moseley** on drums. The track-listing is as follows: Side one – 'Camino Royale', 'Cell 152', 'Always Somewhere Else', 'Walking Through Walls'. Side two – 'Give It Away', 'Weightless', 'Group Therapy', 'India Rubber Man', 'Hackett To Pieces'. Hackett will also be undertaking an extensive 21-date tour, with the album musician line-up augmented by **Chas Cronk** (bass) and **John Hackett** (flute).

■ Yet more song titles for the soon-due **Anvil** opus 'Forged In Fire' have escaped from the band's Canadian record label, **Attic**. Altogether 11 numbers will be laid to rest permanently on vinyl, and these will include: 'Never Deceive Me Again', 'Hard Time, Fast Ladies', 'Shadow Love', 'Free As The Wind', 'Future Wars', 'Knob Ticker' (an instrumental), 'Winged Assassins', 'I'll Make It All Up To You', and 'Motormount'. Sadly it seems that the previously announced 'Butter Bust Jerky' won't now be making an appearance. Still, by way of compensation, the band hope to be touring Britain and Europe in May – so who knows, maybe 'BBJ' will be included in their set.



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THE NIGHT I BLEW

"So far so good. I'm enjoying it very much and getting on with the guys in the band rather than arguing. Well, not so much arguments but in Rainbow we just didn't communicate. This group actually talks which is unusual and we all get on very well together." (Graham Bonnet, during recording of 'Assault Attack', July '82.)

"It just wasn't working out. That thing in Sheffield . . . he just didn't seem to be able to cope. I asked him, I said 'What's happening? Can you carry on in the band?' He never gave me an answer" (Michael Schenker, four months later).

THE SERIOUSNESS of 'that thing in Sheffield' could never have been fully appreciated when the wet and weary Reading audience gaped in sheer surprise as Gary Barden stood where they had all expected to see Graham Bonnet – framed once again beneath the blazing MSG emblem with a 'I-know-what's-happened-but-you-don't-and-I'm-not-going-to-tell-you' look on his face. For shock tactics it would have been hard to better.

Only now, 7 months after the event, has Graham Bonnet decided to reveal all in a startlingly frank and sincere fashion, having weathered the snide asides and critical storm that has rained down on him from all sides ever since.

Graham spoke with surprising humour, and with distinct regret, from his manager's Santa Monica home in California and took a deep breath at the first and inevitable question. Just what did happen at the Sheffield gig?

"I don't know what's been said about me over there, but I came off that stage and basically I was totally drunk! I blanked out, I didn't know what I was doing. One of the managers (Rob Cooksey) came down to the dressing room and told me to get back out there because I couldn't remember what I was doing. The whole room was like spinning, it was, it was just like the End, you know.

"Since I joined the band there'd been so many pressures on me to learn 19 songs from the old set, not new ones, and I knew nothing of the old band. I was recording and writing lyrics for the new album as well as learning new tunes and I couldn't do it all at the same time. I said to the band, 'Look, I have a really bad memory problem', which is dead true, 'and I can't remember all this'. Everybody laughed and thought I was joking, but it was the truth. I couldn't learn 19 songs in two weeks. I had the same problem in Rainbow but I didn't have so many old songs to learn."

MSG still refused to believe their singer, so at the Sheffield gig where it all went so wrong for them, Graham had to persuade

one of the road crew to write out and then photo-copy the songs and indicate the changes on separate pieces of paper which were then taped onto the stage monitors for Graham to glance down at if the need arose. Graham managed to get through only four of the tracks.

"By that time my nerve had totally gone. I had had a little argument with Michael before we went on, nothing big deal, it's just that he wouldn't let anyone into the dressing room, and I'd had a couple of drinks and was starting to go. I could feel myself starting to go."

The enthusiastic inhabitants of Sheffield rushed the stage to gawp at their idol, ignoring Graham's cue-cards which slowly started to peel off and put the singer, who was not in the most secure of states, in sufficiently deep water for him to bottle out. "Once they started to peel off, I just thought 'Aah, fucking hell!' and then I ran off. I couldn't do it!"

In the ensuing melée, Graham had taken a stroll behind the

amps to introduce the now infamous 'shadow', Steve Casey, who played rhythm guitar to back up Schenker's lead work only. Eye-witnesses said that Graham and Michael had an argument on stage about this and that Graham had stormed off in gleeful joy having exposed Michael to be nothing but an illusionist, to which Graham can now wholeheartedly disagree with.

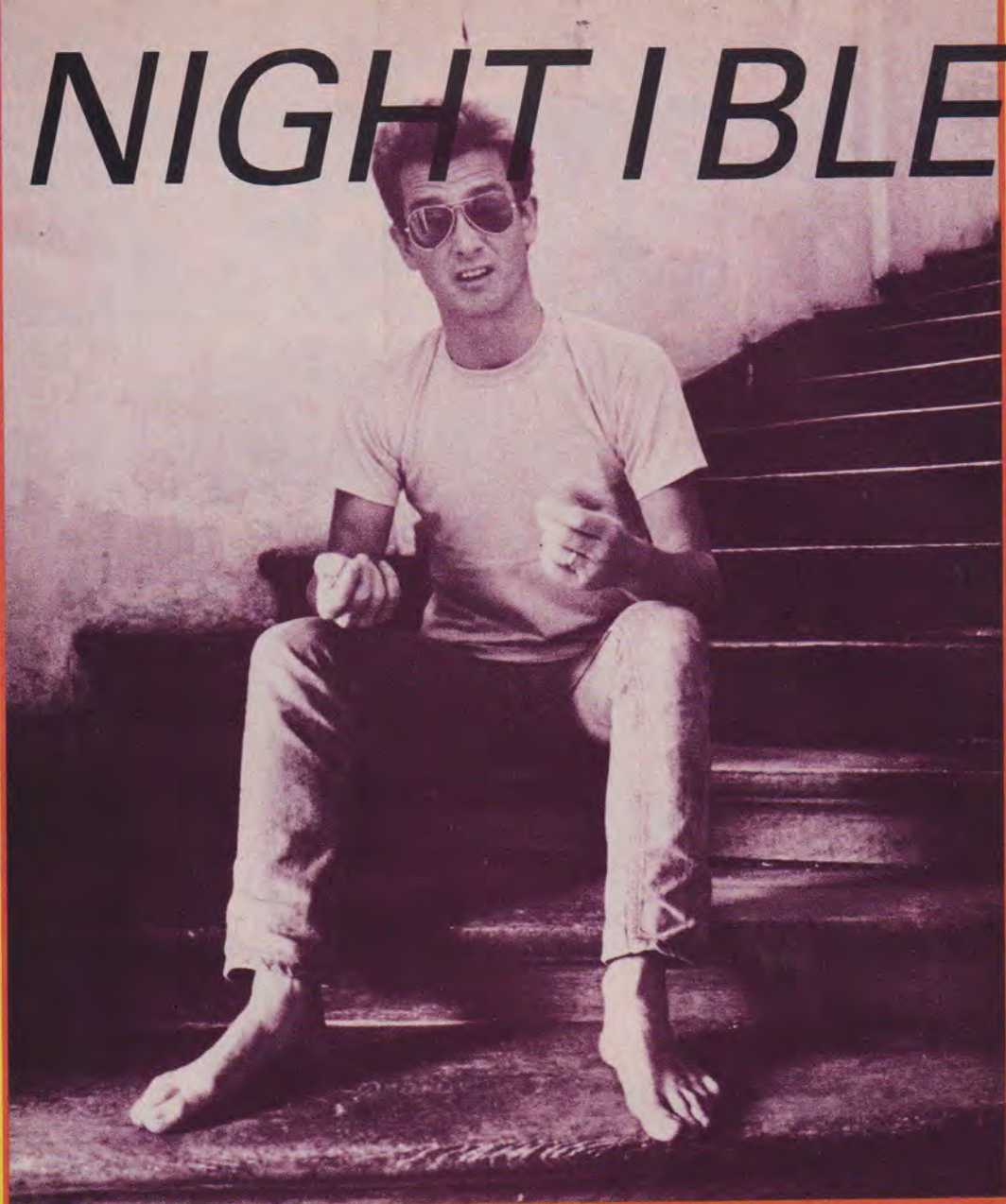
"I would never say anything like that because I have the greatest respect for Michael as a guitar player. I would never put him down in that way at all. I was just introducing the whole band, because they had a keyboard player with them as well, but the reason I did it was because Steve is really shy and gets easily embarrassed so I thought, 'I'll get him now, 'cos he can't run away this time!' All I did was ask him to say hello but it all got blown up from there and I did not intentionally go round there to 'expose' him, as it were.

"I can't blame people who were there in Sheffield for hating me because I made a total fool

out of myself. I apologise to those people, it wasn't me up there and I've never done that before in my life. I just hope that it'll never happen again . . . mind you, I'll probably never work again! It was just a lot of things that had led up, over the months, to that one night. Little things that were getting over-exaggerated during the day and we were getting up-tight.

"We were rehearsing every day for about two months and I kept saying, 'Look, I don't know the bloody songs to be comfortable in singing them, to be able to wander around the stage and to look as though I know what I'm doing.' I had to keep glancing down under the mike, just in case I forgot what I was doing. No one would listen to me, but it was just too much for me to learn in time. I couldn't do it, I just couldn't. Anyway, I just got blind drunk, I admit it, and it came to what happened."

Having persuaded Rob Cooksey that he was not able to carry on with the show, Graham was bundled into a taxi with one



GRAHAM BONNETT: "I made a total fool out of myself . . ."

Graham Bonnett talks for the first time about his legendary exit from the Michael Schenker Group

of the road crew and driven to the band's hotel in Sheffield while the band fumbled their way through the rest of the set. Graham was assured that he would be picked up by the band on their return trip to London in time for Reading preparations. It was the last time he would see the band for they never picked him up and he was stranded in Sheffield with £2 to his name!

"It's funny," he says somewhat sardonically, "but I always seem to get stranded in some corner of the world with only £2 pounds in my pocket! It was about 2 in the morning so I sort of got to sleep feeling really terrible and 'What the hell's happened' sort of thing. Michael's girl-friend called me up and kept phoning me all morning saying 'Do you want to be in the band? Do you want to be in the band?' Michael himself never called but he got his lady to call and asked whether I wanted to do the Reading thing. I said of course I did and I managed to get to London on my banker's card."

On arriving at Kings Cross the following morning and having met with his manager, Andy Truman, it was only then that the news had reached Graham from the MSG camp that the band no longer wanted Graham and they had already persuaded Gary Barden to rejoin with less than 36 hours to go before they were due on stage to headline the Reading festival.

"I couldn't believe it!" he says. "I just didn't believe that Michael would say a thing like that, so I think that the firing actually came from the management rather than the band themselves. I'm not sure about that, I just have a feeling. The thing is, if anyone would understand me on that night I think it would have been Michael because he's been through similar stages in the past. I think Michael's a better kind of guy than that, he would never put a guy down like that."

The very next day, Graham took the first flight out to Los Angeles on a ticket that had been pre-booked by Andy, and arrived back in the States feeling very much the worse for wear.

"A few weeks later," he continues after what sounded like a sigh, "I thought I was glad to be out of MSG but then I woke up really missing them. It was the same thing that happened when I left Rainbow. I'd had enough of Rainbow but after a while I really missed being in a band and that's why I joined the MSG. It took me a year to get that together as well, to think about it whilst they kept me on-file. But now I am sort of glad so it goes up and down day by day."

Graham was never around to see the official release of 'Assault Attack' which was successfully completed in July last year and released just before Christmas.

With a virtually new band, with the exception of bassist Chris Glen who decided to stick by Michael Schenker after losing Cozy Powell, Paul Raymond and Gary Barden, it represented a change in MSG. The songs seemed to have been better thought out and they suited Graham's voice ideally to create a showcase album for the band. Surprisingly however, Graham was not pleased with his own performance on vinyl, as he explains:

"I hated the final production because it sounded like 'let's-forget-about-Graham' time. I can understand what went on because you can imagine what happened after I was sacked and everyone was really angry and they were going to take me off altogether and rewrite them all with Gary, but there was no time due to the release date, etc, so I think it's more of a guitar album than it originally set out to be."

"I've heard it twice and that's all, I don't really like to play it any more because it brings back bad memories. It's OK though, my Mum and Dad have got it! They always buy my stuff, they started when I first recorded songs way back in '68 and they told me which ones have been bad or good so I always listen to them."

"They've gone with me through every stage of my life through being a pop singer, to MOR, to going out fronting a Heavy Metal band. They used to come to a lot of live gigs with Rainbow and they were going to come to the Reading thing and tell me where I went wrong."

"I think the next album would have been better if Michael and I had written together from the word go. That's another thing, I had to catch up on the work that had already gone down on the album when I first started with the band because Gary was already writing material for 'Assault Attack' before he got fired."

When Graham joined MSG, or what was left of it, there had already been the aforementioned line-up changes which did not make for a stable atmosphere anyway between any of the band. It was as much a trial and error situation for the band as it was for Graham. If there had not been the upheavals and Graham had been drafted into a secure outfit, did he think that the pressure problems that finally split the outfit could have been sorted out earlier on or even dealt with in the initial stages?

"Yes, I think so, because everyone was worried at the time what was going to happen to the band anyhow. Cozy was in charge of the band before, Cozy was the manager in a way. It was (adopts the American announcer drawl) 'Cozy Powell, of the year, 1981'! It was great but he wanted

to do the whole bit and he went over the top, to quote an album. He started to get like I was!

"But yeah, if I'd been in there from the word go and we'd grown up together then it never would have come to what it did. It was just starting to come together but then I destroyed it with that one night. It's a shame, especially from the management side, to be that so short-sighted."

Since leaving the band last July, there has been a silence from the Graham Bonnet camp and an unwillingness to join in the bloodbath. Why?

"Well," he says pensively, "I've had a long 'what the hell am I going to do' time and I just couldn't face it right away. I feel sorry for the band because they couldn't get away from it."

"I've been in the studio recently with some friends, laying down some stuff in a Rock and Roll context, but it's sort of here and there at the moment. It's going to be good I think. I don't know whether it's going to be called the Graham Bonnet Group yet, it's sort of 'well, what shall we do?', you know."

"I want to start writing again and it's now a question of writing with another guy. I don't want to say any names yet in case it all falls through and then I'd look even sillier. I can say though that it's a bit of a cross between Rainbow and MSG. What I'd now like to be is a band member instead of going solo as such - that's why, as I said before, I missed being out of Rainbow and that's why I got back into the group thing again."

How are things between you and MSG nowadays?

"I haven't spoken to anyone from there since the split," he says, "I just keep getting various reports saying I've been slagged to pieces. I've had phone-calls from the group's management saying that Michael's saying

good things about me and it all seems a bit strange."

"My feelings on it now in retrospect are very mixed. It's frightening to think about that night because it wasn't me, it was another person up there. It was some silly, drunken idiot from Skegness, you know, and the management couldn't take the risk of me balling it up at the Reading thing. It scares me, I mean, Christ, I was in tears and I came back here and all I could think was 'Oh, God, what have I done?'. I felt like I'd just thrown my life away and I guess I had in a way. Part of it anyway."

"I was very upset for a long time, I still have nightmares now about that bloody night! 'What went wrong? What did I say?' For me though there was no big deal about that night, I didn't think I was going to be sacked. It was just like 'Ah, there goes another guy who couldn't handle it'. Too much... whatever, you know."

"I was mainly upset with the band because I thought they respected me as a musician. It was my fault and I know it means nothing, but I'm sorry to all the fans. Can I also just say a 'Hello' to all the band, but mainly to Big Youth and Steve Casey for standing by me and lending a hand. Also to Ted because he was the newest member and tell them that I miss them all."

"When all this is finished though, I still have the greatest respect for Graham. Graham is one of the best singers in the world. It's a shame, mainly for what could have been something really special." (Michael Schenker during the 'head-hunt', November '82).

CHRIS WATTS



GRAHAM BONNETT: "I felt like I'd just thrown my life away..."

FINALLY, A GREAT BODY IS WITHIN REACH.



Pic Fin Costello

AND HERE it is, folks. Living, breathing proof that all those recent stories concerning Samson vocalist Nicky Moore and his ginormous weight loss are indeed true.

Above we see the happy man in all his glory, surrounded by a veritable feast of eye-boggling goodies – it's no wonder his *Kerrang!* tee-shirt is showing signs of ripping at the seams! However, all has dramatically changed, as can be gleaned by a glance at the pencil-slim figurine on the left. Who is this svelt, lettuce-chewing star? Why, none other than Nicky himself, fresh from a crash-course diet that has seen him lose an incredible seven stone, making him *Kerrang!*'s undisputed 'Slimmer Of The Month'.

But, the question must be asked – will this Bunter-style weight reduction actually impair the Moore lung capacity? Are we to witness the man's leonine roar reduced to a mouse-like squeak? The moment of truth is approaching fast, for the band take to the road for a two week UK tour in early April, following on from their recent 'Red Skies' hit single.

And will Nicky's example be taken up by other mega-weight mayhem merchants? Ah, that remains to be seen, although we await the arrival of the new Meat Loaf LP, and it's attendant photo spread, with considerable interest! MALCOLM DOME



Pic Wigan Brunelli



DALE BOZZIO

DALE BOZZIO is the strikingly clad lady who fronts Missing Persons, currently one of the hottest acts in America with an album firmly lodged in the US Top 20. Hailing from LA, the band was put together by Dale and husband Terry (sorry chaps!) along with Warren Cuccurullo, the three of them having served stints with Frank Zappa.

Under the wing of producer Ken Scott, noted for his work with Gamma amongst others, they put together the concept of Missing Persons and made for the top. Visually, Dale, a former model and Playboy bunny, was clearly a winner and the band's effervescent blend of rock power and pop charm was soon attracting interest on a purely aural basis too.

Their first offering was a four-track mini album (Capitol DLP 15001), a US only release, that captured the airwaves and shot into the charts. It was recorded shortly before the arrival of the final pieces of the line-up jigsaw, namely Chuck Wild and ex-Zappa man Patrick O'Hearn. The band's debut album rapidly followed the mini LP up the charts and they've now committed to extensive road work that recently brought them to Britain for a flying visit. PAUL SUTER

DALE BOZZIO: pic by Ross Halfin

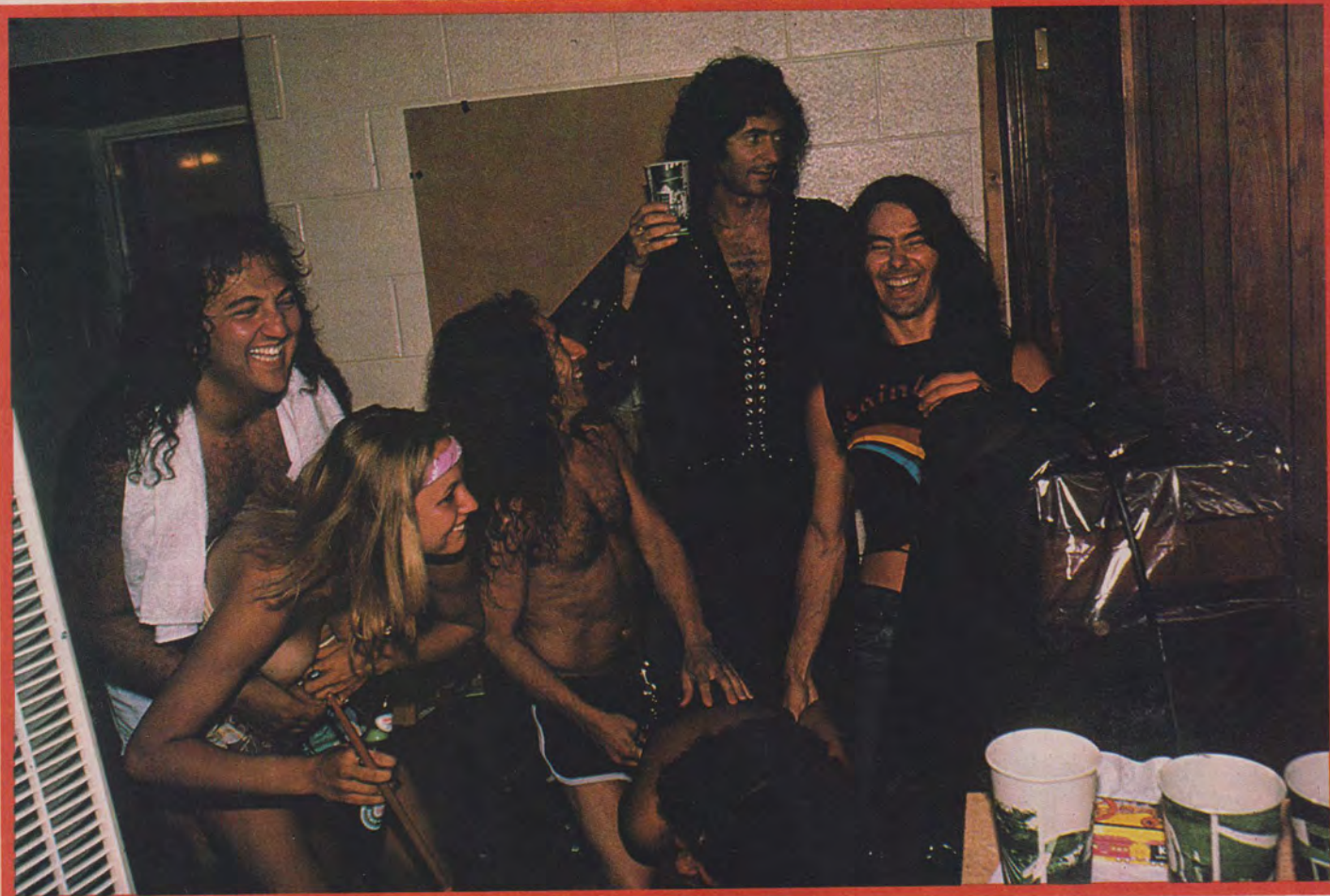
LEE AARON

LEE AARON, pictured here onstage at Toronto's premier rock club 'El Mocambo', seems to be heading rapidly in an upwards direction. Domestic interest in Canada has escalated to the point where a 60-minute TV special was recently broadcast across the country in stereo, with radio stations joining in on a full simulcast. Santer had originally been booked to appear as special guests, thanks to the band's contribution to her debut album, but they pulled out at the last minute and were replaced by noted loony Frank Soda (the man who explodes TV sets on his head whilst pumping out outrageous HM riffs), who also played his part in making the record. Moxy's Buzz Shearman and Earl Johnson also appear on both album and show, and the whole package is alleged to be an absolute blinder.

Heavy Metal Records are hoping to release the album in the UK shortly, and it is hoped that a UK showing of the TV special may be arranged to coincide with the release of the record - Kerrang! is keeping its fingers crossed. And its toes too, because Lee is planning a British visit in the none-too distant future, probably around the first week of May.

That's if she can tear herself away of course. Film and TV offers are cropping up in both Canada and the USA with increasing regularity, and the prospect of Lee becoming the first multi-media HM star is not remote any longer. Enthusiastic punters are invited to form an orderly queue... PAUL SUTER





Pic by Steve Joester

RITCHIE BLACKMORE (a married man remember) contemplates higher things as The Rods welcome two new members into their fan club. They get a badge as well . . .



Pic by Steve Joester

ROCK FEINSTEIN: "Our third album took only four days to complete . . . yet it's certainly much better than 'Wild Dogs' and maybe even better than our first one."

IN THE RAW

No mention of wild nights or 'wimmin' (honest), as The Rods get serious with MALCOM DOME

THEY BREED 'em tough on the tracks in New York's rock 'n' roll sewers. 'Tough' as in possessing steel girders for back bones. 'Tough' as in knowing only one meaning for 'defeat' – they're the strange-looking biological curios at the end of steam-piston driven legs, used to stamp out all known competition!

None are more determined in this nether-world of Heavy Metal barbarians than the Rods – a battle-hardened trio of scarred 'n' scalded sound assassins who've spent most of their few years together fending off monster problems of one sort or another. Theirs, it can truly be said, has been an uphill struggle, trying to convince an oft-sceptical American music business that the primitive, unblemished accelerated power-chord is still the most provocative, potent, and persuasive tool available to a contemporary muso.

Last year, it seemed at least mutha fate had called the shots, and for once the Rods were in the right place at the right time to achieve a 'touchdown'. You don't need reminding of those halycon daze (sic) do you? For, after the band's debut LP on Arista hit the streets all sorts of madness broke loose. A rapid-cult breakthrough was made in England, something underlined by their rather impressive appearances in the Iron Maiden Brit tour, producing genuine music to bend iron maidens? to

As if all this wasn't enough, the band then got the steam flowing through the pipes with a sell-out performance at London's Marquee – a real sweat-hog night of blistering bliss. And, of course, there was also the second Rods LP, produced by the band with Martin Pearson at Battle Studios, near sunny Hastings. Now this should have been the album to really establish the band as a major force in the Meltdown. But it actually turned out to be the beginning of nothing, the start of a load of troubles.

But a failure of this magnitude (which if you think about it is hardly the end of the world, given the semi-shoestring budget set aside for the recording sessions - Battle is hardly Nassau, right?) shouldn't have proved anything more than an irritation if their

record label had been prepared to take it in philosophical part, and look to the future. Aha, but talking recently to band guitarist Dave 'Rock' Feinstein, it soon became abundantly clear that hadn't been the case this time around.

"Within a month of the album coming out, it became obvious to us that Arista in America were not prepared to put anything into promoting 'Wild Dogs' (the title of that second LP). We had meetings with them before it was issued, and they'd promised us a big advertising campaign, all sorts of promotion, and financial help to get on major tours. But it never happened. There was hardly any advertising back-up, and we ended doing very little work on the road. The problem was that the label just wasn't into trying to break a rock act – we were getting very unhappy with them and their attitude, and they were clearly fed up with us."

So, a divorce was eventually effected between band and label. I say 'eventually' because, although the seeds of discontent were sown early last year, it took the Rods until the end of '82 to become free agents once more.

"Arista did say we could go in August of last year, but only if we gave 'em points [a royalty cut] on our next album, whoever it might be signed over to. We actually thought about doing this at first just to get away. But, eventually, everybody agreed we should get out of the contract as simply as possible, by letting it run out, and not allow Arista to retain any sort of hold over the Roots. If we'd fallen foul of that arrangement and our next LP were to take off, they'd be reaping some benefit without doing anything to help it."

He should say, though, that when he talks about Arista, I'm only referring to the American side of things. In Britain, they were sending to the Band all the time – I've no complaints about them whatsoever. For instance, when we went to come over last summer for the Reading Festival, the American part of the company was actually willing to put some of the expenses necessary, but the British side wouldn't pay a penny towards the cost, so we couldn't come. The same happened last year when we were put into the ABC's tour of Britain, but our manager was always with the band in the States, never England.

With their *The Rods* now finally rid themselves of the corporation shackles. And the upshot is that their latest album, *In The Raw*, has just appeared on Mike Varney's Shrapnel label, based in San Francisco. The Rods and Varney are, of course, no

strangers, the former having had tracks on each of the first two 'US Metal' compilations put together by the latter.

"This is only a one-album deal, though, acting as a bridge between international releases on major labels. In actual fact, 'In The Raw' is made up mainly of demos, but it's turned out pretty well. What happened was, we returned home last summer, after supporting Judas Priest on part of their American tour, and wrote 17 new songs. By coincidence, a friend of ours who owns a studio (Barret Alley) in Rochester, New York, invited us to come over for a week-end. It wasn't supposed to be a working week-end, just, y'know, a partying time. But we went into his studio, and over two days managed to record all 17 numbers. It was only done to get an idea of how they sounded on tape, but our manager, Pete Moticelli, happened to be in California soon afterwards, played the tapes to Varney, and he liked 'em. So, 10 have now turned up on vinyl!

"We actually left the songs practically in their original demo form. We did spend a couple of days just adding some vocal overdubs and guitar touches, but that was it. So, our third album took only four days to complete, which is the shortest period we've ever spent on an LP. Yet, it's certainly much better than 'Wild Dogs' and maybe even better than our first one. I'm really anxious to see what the reaction in England is to it, 'cos after all, our style of music means that England and Europe generally is where we expect to make the biggest impact."

By the time Brit Kerrang! aficionados have had a chance to judge whether the Rods can still 'get it up' as hard 'n' fast as ever was the musical case, the band may well have signed away their fourth album to another big record company. As Feinstein said, the Shrapnel linkage is strictly an on-going one-off situation, and the band are now ravenously scouring label targets for their next vinyl assault. Already, they've recorded a three-track demo tape with Uriah Heep producer Ashley Howe that allegedly has had several A&R executives leaping around rather like tennis umpires who've discovered a way of quelling John McEnroe.

"I think these songs represent the best the band has ever sounded. Ashley is a great producer, and it's such a pleasure just to be able to sit back and let a guy handle the production who you know you can trust. We did this demo at Barret Studios as well. It's only a 16-track affair, but the entire studio is very

comfortable to work in, and the sound is fabulous. The way things are shaping up with Ashley, we'll at last be able to do our logical second album; an album that comes across like the first one, only takes things a step further. 'Wild Dogs' didn't do that, unfortunately, and 'In The Raw' after all is only a collection of demos. People who've heard this new tape, though, have been stunned – they just don't believe it's the Rods.

"One of the numbers is called 'Stay On Top', which is a song Ashley brought over from England. I dunno who wrote it, but it's certainly commercial and melodic. The others are 'Love Is Pain', which I wrote and is Heavy Metal, but with a difference, and 'Cold Sweat And Blood', written by myself and Carl (Canedy—drummer). It's only the second number we've ever written together, but it's a typical Rods-style cut."

Fortunately, it looks as though Britain won't have to wait for protracted negotiations on a new recording deal to be finalised before les Rods return to these sandy shores, bringing with 'em their own flash 'n' smash brand of knees-up and six-barrelled badlam. For, despite 'In The Raw' being only available on import at present, and the Rods having no mega-bankability on the rock 'n' roll stock market, nothing will deter 'em from playing here soon.

"Even if we have made our way over in row boats, we'll certainly be coming within the next six months. Just exactly what our plans are I can't say, but we're really looking forward to seeing all our friends in Britain once again. What sort of gigs we'll play is also uncertain at the moment, but we'd prefer to get the top spot on a major tour if possible. We'll just have to wait and see."

[illegible]

MARILLION

'Script For A Jester's Tear'
(EMI EMC 3429)

EVERY SO often there comes into your possession an album that will affect you very deeply on an emotional level, that will touch upon open nerve-ends, re-awaken feelings you thought long dead, or evoke new ones; fear, insecurity, alienation, isolation.

'Script For A Jester's Tear' is Marillion's debut album, they have spent two years writing it and it does move me. It is a deeply personal album and if it is to work then it must operate on a personal level. In effect it becomes impossible, therefore, to review, I can only tell you how it affected me, pass on the impressions I experienced while playing it.

I felt this album, at least some of the songs on this album, could have been written for me, a personal view seen through my eyes. It can be disturbing to discover that an artist has stepped inside your brain, stolen your thoughts, those private thoughts hidden and entrenched by social defence mechanisms, and translated them into songs. And now Fish has managed to pen words I had remained too ignorant or inarticulate, or perhaps too fearful, to express.

The title track I found unsettling, at 'The Web' I very nearly cried. That intensity of emotion is a rare gift. Fish likened the experience to digital recording wherein a sound is numerically recorded to be reproduced exactly at the press of a button. Here the words describe and hold within their form that initial input of emotion, on playing they trigger that same feeling all over again. Although this is far from being a lyrically dominated album they are an intrinsic part of its make up. They are not mere embellishment on the melody as is too often the case, but a vital and vibrant ingredient to the album's composition and overall structure.

It would perhaps be unfair at this stage in Marillion's career (indeed I shall wait for confirmation from the second album before passing final judgement) to laud Fish as possibly the most important lyricist this country has produced since David Bowie, but that nagging sentiment has already taken root.

There are only six songs on this album: 'Script For A Jester's Tear', 'He Knows You Know', 'The Web', 'Garden Party', 'Chelsea Monday' and 'Forgotten Sons', although the running time clocks in at around 44 minutes. The only real disappointment, I think, is the final track, their onstage *piece de resistance*. Transferred into vinyl the song loses that awesome, brittle fear it can invoke and the Death-approaching sequence strangely dispenses with the all-important pause altogether. They have also introduced a newscaster's voice whose lines Fish parallels beneath. I don't feel this works or adds anything to the song somehow. But it remains a powerful indictment and the imagery created can still grip like an ice-cold hand.

'Script...' exemplifies what Marillion do best, cataloguing the greyness, and here the grey invades an otherwise perfect relationship at the invitation of the main character, and for no apparent reason which makes the self-destruction all the more tragic. The word paly, too, is

quite intriguing: write/rites/right/ wrongs, and morning/mourning. Such juxtapositions occur frequently throughout the album and are worth listening out for. The harpsichord intro gives way to Mick Pointer's forceful, if at times unadventurous, drumming.

'He Knows You Know' examines a painful withdrawal, the memory of empty advice offered by supposedly well-meaning priests, analysts and parents who each fail to recognise the real need. You've probably already heard the single and know how Pointer dominates the proceedings.

'Garden Party' is "a cynical dig at the upper-classes and the bubbles they place themselves in." The music is sprinkled with a lilting joviality that hammers home the point.

Which leaves us with the two most personal tracks on the album, 'The Web', to Fish, and 'Chelsea Monday', to myself.

'The Web' describes the break up of a relationship and the ultimate decision to leave a loved one behind, in effect severing that relationship and sacrificing that security for something that may, ultimately, offer only obscurity. I feel with him and for him for the chance he has taken. Steve Rothery's guitars weave intricate patterns without allowing himself the indulgence of shattering the carefully structured scenery. This is a masterpiece.

And 'Chelsea Monday'. Whenever a song presents you with a situation you have encountered in real life it is liable to make an impression all the more deep. 'Chelsea Monday' relates the tragic story of a girl in her bedst dreaming of stardom as an actress and yet not having the guts to go out and make that dream a reality: "Perform to scattered shadows on the shattered cobbled aisles/Would she dare recite soliloquies at the risk of stark applause."

When you know someone in that same situation, her head buried in the sand as the world trickles by, waiting for the fabled knight to bring her fame and fortune, ready-made, on a silver platter, it hurts somehow. She always wants it to be Sunday so she can dream her dreams in front of her mirror. The tragedy comes in her decision to commit suicide in order to gain that elusive headline; no-one applauded but at least she had her fifteen minutes of fame, smiling at her triumph. A heart-breaking but curiously compelling tale, the gloomy emptiness of the narrative's tone being set by the moaning guitar and the tip-toeing bass line at the beginning. I was touched and disturbed, and there's not much else you can ask from a song, is there?

As a debut album this is extremely impressive, fully living up to the band's previous promise. I can't conceive that anyone is going to be disappointed.
DAVE DICKSON

KROKUS

'Headhunters'
(Arista Advance Copy)

KABROOM! I warned you a couple of issues ago, this album was gonna take you by storm. KABROOM! If 'Metal Rendezvous'/'One Voice...' showed Krokus were going places,

'Headhunters' has them arriving, alive 'n' kicking ass. KABROOM! This is an armour-plated symphony of matchless brilliance, blood-lust, belligerence, battle-thirst... and any other superlatives you can think of, beginning with the letter 'b'.

So, you thought Krokus were mere AC/DC rip-off merchants? Forget it, dummy. If 'HH' proves anything it's this, - Switzerland's finest now outgun and outflank the former Aussie masters on all fronts. Indeed, this album should definitely be sub-titled 'In The Roar', such is its fury. The title cut sets the blistering pace and none of the succeeding eight numbers fall by the wayside on the journey - how many even top-notch metal acts can claim such stratospheric consistency on vinyl?

The 'Headhunters' cut itself possesses a huge, elephantine sound that's a tribute to producer Tom Allom. Built on a foundation of bruising jungle rhythms from new drummer Steve Pace (compared to this monument of muscular menace, Freddy Steady is a skinsbeating midget), thus number stalks and prowls with a ROARrganised rage.

You might find hints of Judas Priest or Scorpions ('Dynamite' from the 'Blackout' set comes to mind, riff-wise) herein, but the overwhelming impression is of a band who now have the confidence and capacity to draw from the same wellsprings as these illustrious contemporaries, without seeming at all derivative. Fernando Von Arb's fluid, mesmeric guitar runs are an especial revelation. So often content to play the jester at the court of the crimson guitar hero, he's now thrown off the joker's togs to reveal that underneath it all lurks a fresh emperor of the axe attack. He unleashes here some of the most inspired fret-board walks I've heard this side of Rik Emmett.

And, of course, riding high over the instrumental snowstorm is the voice of that ultimate ROARgasm addict, Marc Storce. You can almost FEEL his veins bulging as he snaps his way through such glorious lyrics as 'I am the raging bull/Don't feel no sympathy/Sex 'n' drugs 'n' rock 'n' roll/That's my cuppa tea'. You can almost see the moral majority turning deep purple with cowering fear!

That's just one track, though. Later on you can discover the cynically swaggering 'Each The Rich', 'Screaming In The Night' (an astonishing power-ballad that is a worthy successor to 'Tokyo Nights'), the howling, baying brutality of 'Night Wolf', and 'Ready To Burn', featuring a manic duet between Storce and Rob Halford that is arguably the debauched heavy equivalent of Hall & Oates.

And just as you think you've heard it all comes 'Russian Winter'. A crash-chord canticle, this is pyromania raised to the level of genocide. Bringing back reminders of 'Easy Rocker' from 'Hardware', it mingles mid-European folk rhythms with gale force nine concussive metal. If this one doesn't kill you stone dead, then you were probably a corpse before you switched on the stereo.

Whilst others might pay lip service to it, 'Headhunters' sees Krokus playing true ROAR games - and coming out as undisputed winners. 'I am the animal, I am the beast, I love to see you bleed, so welcome to my feast.'

(Headhunters)
MALCOLM DOME

CREAM

'Strange Brew - The Very Best Of Cream'
(RSO RSD 5021)

HISTORICALLY, Cream were probably the first heavy band whom today's fans would recognise as being, well, heavy.

In a period of just over two years, they came, they saw, they conquered... and then, promptly split up, leaving behind a legacy of great tracks, fun-filled memories, and astonishing musicianship.

No compilation album however well-intentioned can truly capture the style and innovative genius that made Clapton/Bruce/Baker such an explosive trio. There was just too much attention to detail on everything they did to make any collection other than a drop in the ocean.

However, as Cream compilations go, this one isn't all bad. The likes of 'Badge', 'Sunshine Of Your Love', 'White Room', and 'Spoonful', tracks by which almost everyone in the heavy field later set their sights, are inevitably included. But, it's also gratifying to see 'Swalbr', 'Anyone For Tennis', and 'Tales Of Brave Ulysses' getting a fair shout as well.

Overall, with interesting sleeve-note reprints from contemporary articles on the band (including a couple from our very own Chris Welch), 'Strange Brew' is a good introduction to a legend during and after their time. But, no way is it a substitute for owning the entire Cream catalogue!
MALCOLM DOME

PAUL KOSOFF

'Leaves In The Wind'
(Streettune STLP 002)

PAUL KOSOFF was one of seventies rock's most unrequited talents. When he died in 1976, the eloquent bard of the axe had only partially fulfilled his potential, leaving behind a recorded legacy that has sadly passed over the heads of a new rockin' generation.

To put his masterly qualities into perspective, it is undoubtedly true his understated, misleadingly simple style was THE cornerstone to Free's enormous popularity. If you doubt the validity of this statement, then listen again to 'My Brother Jake', 'Wishing Well', or even 'All Right Now', and whilst it was Paul Rodgers' explosive vocals which catch the imagination, Kosoff's economic, blues-based effusiveness clearly gave them their unforgettable structure. He never pushed the guitar to the fore of the mix, but was at his best playing a secondary role, underpinning the momentum.

This praiseworthy aptitude never shone through when Free disintegrated and Kosoff went on to form Back Street Crawler. Like many other rock giants, he was scarcely a leader, and this showed through with BSC. He just couldn't control or inspire those around him, and yet because he insisted on trying, this took the edge off his musical development. So, as this album draws solely on the Back Street Crawler era of Kosoff's career, it can hardly be called a package of his finest moments.

Four of the tracks are previously unreleased live cuts culled from Croydon's Fairfield Hall in '75, and featuring the first BSC line-up. But

these are embarrassing numbers of interest to Kossoff freaks only, as they are badly recorded and expose the band in their most slovenly state. The other five songs come from the second BSC squad and will be well-known studio tracks to all Kossoff-philies. The title ditty is a slow-burning piece of angst, with some neat interplay between the gently weeping Kossoff guitar and Terry Slesser's raunchy vocals. 'Raging River' is very much a Kossoff virtuoso party-piece (perhaps his best post-Free work). 'Some Kind Of Happy' has the crystal-blues texture of early Motown, whilst 'Blues Soul' and 'Just For You' could almost be early Bob Seger road-weary epigrams.

Now, all these songs are respectable, but you're left with a feeling of empty promises. Put 'Leaves . . . ' alongside last year's 'Completely Free' and the truth is revealed. Kossoff needed an extraordinary talent like Rodgers to bring out the best in him. When this anchor was removed, the guitarist lost his impetus. So, unless you enjoy the sound of a unique rocker going to seed, or else must have every piece of vinyl bearing the Kossoff name, this is one LP most decidedly NOT for you. MALCOLM DOME

STORM 'Storm' (Capitol ST-12259)

AT LONG last, the fabled Storm album emerges, at the second attempt no less. The first shot, with Mike Stone of Journey fame in the production seat was deemed not up to standard and binned; take two features Michael Verdict on the board (qv the last Jay Ferguson release), and proves to be the subject of much debate.

Believe it or believe it not, numero uno Storm fanatic Malcolm Dome actually finds himself in two minds over the album – well, about nineteen actually, and most of them either mystified or disappointed. Pete Makowski was heard to liken the record to Pentangle – mind you, everything sounds like Pentangle on the weedy office stereo – and yours truly was not expecting too much when I took the album home for a personal post-mortem. But whaddya know – it's an absolutely astonishing 35 minutes of mind-rattling savagery that adds new meaning to the expression over the top.

Storm exhibit a uniquely dramatic approach to HR, a symphonic gross-out that's simultaneously exultant and crushingly powerful; a large proportion of their writing (all from the pens of Lear Stevens and Jeanette Chase, who together really are Storm) seems to consist of a succession of musical vignettes dovetailed together like a tape loop. The only parallel I can scrape up would be a gargantuan re-run of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' with monstrous powerchords overloading it almost to breaking point. Almost.

In their more straightforward moments Storm are a force to be reckoned with on any level, witness the sleazy viciousness of 'Runnin' From You' which evokes memories of 'Machine Gun' from that long-gone MCA album. Vocalist Jeannette Chase puts in a toe-curling performance of raw-throated power, something that she proves herself a master of – or should that read mistress? – time and time again throughout the course of the album.

It's difficult to come to terms with individual tracks per se; they're a succession of events, full of excitement but apparently lacking in cohesion and overall format. The tracks come and go with bewildering speed, a phrase here and another there sinking into the memory banks but then failing to slot into place. The

result is a jumble of impressions – but they're all great!

And there's the conundrum – the album's difficult to come to terms with, but the lasting impressions that it succeeds in leaving are almost all totally overwhelming: the booming power of the drum tracks, the cathartic attack of Lear Stevens guitarwork, and Jeanette Chase's throaty magic are all tokens of a band that are quite simply heavier than anyone else but always imaginative rather than HM and leaden.

Storm are totally and utterly unique. As a consequence they're not easy to come to grips with on a conventional level; I recommend that you make the effort though – it will prove highly rewarding. PAUL SUTER

AIRBRIDGE 'Paradise Moves' (Carve-Up CU 3)

I KNOW bandwagons attract all sorts of dull dross desperately trying to clamber on-board the gravy train, but this lot are an insult to the current 'in' term of 'progressive' or 'intelligent' rock.

'Paradise Moves' sounds like this Norwich-based quartet sifted through their collection of BJH/Camel albums, ripped out whole chunks arbitrarily, and just tried to reproduce 'em on vinyl.

It's a pity no-one told 'em you need talent to make such a move work. The musicianship herein is close to hopeless, whilst the apologies for vocals would be hysterically funny if not for the fact that they mean YOU to part with your money to join in the joke.

As for the songs, titles like 'Sic Vita' and 'Paradise Moves (A Bridge In The Air)' tell their own pathetic story – not a shred of ingenuity is to be found anywhere. MALCOLM DOME

RED RIDER 'Neruda' (Capitol ST-12226)

IF YOUR bag is synth/rock/pop in the modern idiom, then doubtless you will find much to crow about on this, the third release from the Canadian fivesome. The instrumental performances are well-structured and highly satisfying, and the breadth of composition moves from deliberately up-tempo moodies like 'Crack The Sky' to more sensitive balladry.

But . . . I'm just getting a touch fed up with the way so many hard rock acts these days (Sammy Hagar included) have opted to cage the 'metallic beast' in the cause of mass credibility and sales. Being an arch philistine at heart, I find nothing remotely invigorating about an LP of thoughtful, electronic, facelessness. Give me the hammer of the crash-chord, and the slaughter of the ear-drums any day!

All of which means that if you're after an objective statement, then I'd say give this body a spin. However, if, like me, you find listening to the likes of modern Rush an intellectual bore, then avoid 'Neruda' in favour of something with a little more bite not to mention humanity. MALCOLM DOME

TRASH 'Watch Out' (RCA International Import)

THERE'S something stirring in the badlands of Scandinavia. Skeletal, painfully thin, and androgynous interpretations of HM-Glamour 'n' guts is the order of the day it seems. First

there was Finland's Hanoi Rocks, now it's Sweden's Trash.

Now while Trash probably boast similar roots 'n' influences to the Rocks, their whole outlook and approach is so much more professional – a fact they rarely let you forget. Who's to say which is a better stance at least they both represent a refreshing attitude to a school of rock that brought us bands like Spider, both Rocks 'n' Trash tuition has more in common with the training that brought about Oi and the new Punks.

It's an enjoyable/rock steady affair although the group immediately lose any vague semblance of integrity with a hilarious rendition of Lou Reed's S&M classic 'Vicious' featuring, hopefully, ham fisted vocals which transform the title into 'Weeshus' giving it an endearing clumsy foreign feel.

Unlike Euro bands such as Krokus and The Scorpions at least Trash are trying to carve out their own little niche without obviously emulating their influences. Sure it's dumb and derivative with song titles courtesy of rent-a-cliche but at least they're waving a banner for Swedish metal which, judging by the influx of tapes, videos etc we've received from that barren wasteland is becoming a force unto itself.

"After six months of hard work in the studios with Marshall amps at top volume and the best engineers at the mixing table . . . in a cold, draughty room a new band was born," proclaims the press release (which should be released in its own right). They may be Trash but they're definitely not rubbish! PETE MAKOWSKI

TRANCE 'Power Infusion' (Rockport RO 023 Import)

WHILST the majority of Britos tend to take Priest or Motorhead as their foundation for metal excellence, in Germany it would seem Scorpions and Accept fulfill a similar role. At least, that's the only reason I can think of to explain away Trance's sound on 'Power Infusion'. From the barbing, harshly operatic vocal style of Lothar Antoni, through the concussive guitar, and even the melodically grasping song structures, the band never break away from the traditions of those aforementioned Germanic gladiators.

Derivative or not, this is still a tremendous LP. Leaving aside the tedious 'Children Of Illusion' (a simpering power/ballad), there's not a filler in sight or sound. 'Heavy Metal Queen', 'Rockstar', 'Burn Your Lies', and 'Sensation' all combine tuneful accomplishment with rumbling riffs, whilst 'Glasshouse', 'Shock Power', and 'Storm & Thunder' provide a suitably vast 'n' fast fuel for acute 'eardrums'.

The production is uniformly spartan, and the lyrics are by and large cringe-ville quality ('Everyday a bluebird carries time away to say/That the end is coming near – a price we have to pay'). But, I'd still recommend any self-respecting hard rock freak to hunt hi and lo for a copy of this Godzilla-style monster. Yeah, it's THAT good! MALCOLM DOME

USA 'USA' (PRT Records PWLP 1002)

THIS ALBUM is apparently available in the UK 'tho whether you'll be able to get hold of it is anybody's guess. I certainly haven't seen it in any shape or form in the shops and it's strange that such a typical US outfit as this (the band hail from Philadelphia, I believe) should slip through a net

which seems to stifle the release of so much product from across the Atlantic.

USA hit the ears as a cross between two fine outfits which are now sadly defunct. Larry Baud's simple keyboard licks taste of Angel's Greg Giuffria; 'I Love You' and 'Can't Get You Out Of My Mind' could be easily mistaken for the whiter than white ones circa 'Sinful'. Then Rod Margolis' more aggressive guitar-orientated numbers 'Hard Life' and 'Teenage Rock 'n' Roller' smack of Starz.

Now I'm not suggesting that this album can match the product of these two mega-bands, but the potential is there.

HOWARD JOHNSON

NANTUCKET 'No Direction Home' (RCA AFL1-4651 (US Import))

TWO CHANCES of RCA putting this one out in the UK: slim and none. Which is a crying shame as this (Nantucket's 4th album overall, and first for RCA) is pretty damn good. But I must confess it took at least four spins to get into.

Mike Shannon (not the footballer, but proprietor of 'Shades', the fastest import shop in the west) recently asked me 'What's so special about this band called Nantucket?' And went on to say that their newie has been the most requested import this year. Nice to know there's some metal fans about who have good taste. So it would appear that Nantucket had a cult underground following here.

'No Direction Home', is Nantucket's first studio outing since 1980, their last album being 'Long Way To The Top', which had its moments but overall was very disappointing. But I'm pleased to report a label swap seems to have done the job. As the Tucket's have come out with a totally new and fresh sound, and hats off to Mike Flicker, the man who bought you Heart.

The title track could have come off any one of Nantucket's previous albums. The guitar work of Messrs Tommy Redd and Mark Downing is simply unique. New lad Thumbs Johnson gets a chance to show off at the beginning of 'I Don't Want To Lose You' with a very catchy, yet eerie bass sound, and Larry Uzzell's almost too-casual vocals make it all worth while. Some folk may find the use of saxophone slightly offensive, and I'm afraid Nantucket do have a habit of letting keyboardist Eddie Blair blow once too often, especially on 'Girl I've Got Your Number'.

The b-side closes with the album's winner – 'Tennessee Whiskey'. An absolute classic, and being a bourbon connoisseur I should know! It's a pity the rest of the LP isn't as 'easy', then again it's a pity Lou Grant, isn't good every week. Nantucket have obviously had to play it safe this time out, to keep RCA happy. Now let's hope they're slightly more adventurous with their next offering. XAVIER RUSSELL

STREETHEART 'Dancing With Danger' (Capitol ST 6499)

HOVERING just below the waterline of the Canadian iceberg, Streetheart have been poised for international visibility for a while now, but have never managed to secure the major foreign releases that they need. 'Dancing With Danger' however is in many ways an American record – the band have been picked up by Pasha (Billy Thorpe's label, about to release the new Quiet Riot album) and this album was recorded under Pasha's tutelage in Hollywood.

In keeping with the 'Canadians for America' approach this album sees

more Album Kuts page 21

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ROCK RAVENS

STEVE HACKETT takes to the road in April for a major tour in support of his new LP, 'Highly Strung': Worthing, Pavillion, April 19, Birmingham, Odeon 20, Newcastle, City Hall 21, Manchester, Apollo 22, Edinburgh, Playhouse 23, Bradford, University 25, Liverpool, Empire 26, Bristol, Colston Hall 27, Dunstable, Queensway Hall, 28, Southampton, Gaumont 29, London, Hammersmith Odeon 30/May 1, Oxford, Apollo 2, Southend, Cliff Pavillion 3, Northampton, Derngate Centre 4, Sheffield, City Hall 5, Nottingham, Royal Centre 6, Margate, Winter Gardens 7, Poole, Arts Centre 8, Norwich, University Of East Anglia 9.

Tickets are available from the usual agents and all box offices. Prices for all the shows are £4/£3.50, except London (where they're £4.50/£4) and Southend (all tickets are £4).

SEDUCER, a 'very heavy band from the Kingston area' play Kingston, Grove Tavern, April 6, Kingston, Flippers Club 26.

WIKKYD VIKKER have a gig lined-up at Wigston, Marquis Of Queensbury on March 31. This is the first of a series of dates to promote their debut single, 'Black Of The Night'.

CENTURION have announced the following dates: Stalybridge, Commerical, March 25, York, Bay Horse April 2, Gt Yarmouth, Big Apple 7, Nottingham, Hearty Goodfellow 8, Nottingham, Yorker 10, North Somercoates, Village Hall 15, Wigan, Riverside Club 17, Worthing, Balmoral 21/22, Cleethorpes, Winter Gardens May 5, Dunstable, Wheatheaf 18.

PALLAS have now added the following gigs to their nationwide



STEVE HACKETT: on tour in April and May

tour: Leeds, Fford Green, March 26, Glasgow, Nite Moves 29, Aberdeen, The Venue 31.

IQ have now confirmed more British dates: Toddington, The Angel, March 26, Luton, Technical College, April 16, Hemel Hempstead, Cellar Rock Club 21, Greenwich, Mitre Tunnel 26, Southampton, College, May 6, Dunstable, Wheatheaf 25.

LARRY MILLER BAND play the Tonypandy, Naval Club on March 26, and Guildford, Wooden Bridge on 31.

SOLDIER have confirmed the following dates: Middlesbrough, Cavern, April 1, Hereford, Market Tavern 8, Blackburn, Regent Hotel 15/16.

TRUX, heavy rockers from Cambridge headline a mini-festival at Mepal, near Ely. This is entitled The Pegasus Motorcycle Club Horseshit Rally, and is part of a three-day rally organised by the club!

ENGLISH ROGUES play Maidenhead, Bell Rock on March 25.

FORTUNE play London, The Marquee on March 25, as support to Kevin Coyne.

SARACEN, having finalised a new record deal with Neat, play Darley

Dale, Northwood Club on April 4. The band hope to have a new single out for early in April.

SHELL SHOCK have confirmed West Bromwich, Coach & Horses on April 2. **DUMPY'S RUSTY NUTS** have added a new gig at Guildford, Wooden Bridge on April 7.

STALLION, from North Humberdale, go out on the road, playing the following gigs: Leeds, Dock Green, March 27, York, Bayhorse, April 9, Hull, City Hall 16, Ashton-Under-Lyme 23, Nottingham, The Yorker 24, Glossop, Surrey Arms 30, Mansfield, Langwith Miners Club, May 1, Barrow on Malvern, Haven Inn 7, Accrington, Plough Hotel, June 11, Chorley, Joiners Arms August 6, Wigan, The Riverside 7, Huddersfield, White Lion 14.

SPARTAN WARRIOR, from Sunderland, play the South Shields Legion Club on March 29.

LAZY continue their tour with dates at Bradford, Volt Bar on April 6, and High Wycombe, Nags Head 14.

FIST play South Shields, Legion Club on March 25.

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The official HM charts specially compiled for Kerrang! from a nationwide survey of 50 specialist shops

SINGLES

- 1 6 TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE HEART **Bonnie Tyler** (CBS)
- 2 — WHY D'YA LIE TO ME **Spider** (RCA)
- 3 1 COLD SWEAT **Thin Lizzy** (Vertigo)
- 4 10 FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU **Gary Moore** (Virgin)
- 5 12 MY ANGEL **Rock Goddess** (A&M)
- 6 — RED SKIES **Samson** (Polydor)
- 7 — SEPARATE WAYS **Journey** (CBS)
- 8 2 HE KNOWS, YOU KNOW **Marillion** (EMI)
- 9 14 EVERYBODY WANTS YOU **Billy Squier** (Capitol)
- 10 3 AFRICA **Toto** (CBS)
- 11 19 YOUR LAST CHANCE E.P. **Various** (Flickknife)
- 12 — TIME TO ROCK **UFO** (Chrysalis)
- 13 5 SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT **Pat Benatar** (Chrysalis)
- 14 9 MARKET SQUARE HEROES **Marillion** (EMI)
- 15 16 NEEDLE IN THE GROOVE **Mama's Boys** (Ultranoise)
- 16 4 PHOTOGRAPH **Def Leppard** (Mercury)



- 17 — TWILIGHT ZONE **Golden Earring** (Mercury)
- 18 7 YOUR LOVE IS DRIVING ME CRAZY **Sammy Hagar** (Geffen)
- 19 8 ON THE LOOSE **Saga** (Portrait)
- 20 11 SILVER MACHINE **Hawkwind** (United Artists)
- 21 17 CAROLINE LIVE (AT THE N.E.C.) **Status Quo** (Vertigo)
- 22 13 LOVE HURTS E.P. **Nazareth** (NEMS International)
- 23 18 ALL RIGHT NOW **Free** (Island)
- 24 21 CRASH BANG WALLOP **Raven** (Neat)
- 25 29 HEAVY METAL ROCK 'N' ROLL **Rock Goddess** (A&M)
- 26 23 THE WANDERER **Fist** (Neat)
- 27 — OVER, UNDER, SIDEWAYS, DOWN **Yardbirds** (Edsel)
- 28 24 TALKIN' 'BOUT ROCK 'N' ROLL **Spider** (RCA)
- 29 15 GAMES **Nazareth** (NEMS International)
- 30 20 HAND TO HOLD ONTO/HURTS SO GOOD **John Cougar** (Riva)

Compiled by MRIB

LOCAL CHART

- 1 IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT, **Rock Goddess**, A&M 45
 - 2 THE SUN GOES DOWN, **Thin Lizzy**, from 'Thunder and Lightning' Vertigo
 - 3 BLINDED BY A LIE, **UFO**, from 'Making Contact' Chrysalis
 - 4 PLAYING WITH VIETNAMESE, **Stoke Addams Band**, Demo
 - 5 SINK YOUR TEETH INTO THAT, **Talas**, from 'Sink Your Teeth Into That' Food For Thought.
 - 6 MY ANGEL, **Rock Goddess**, A&M 45
 - 7 ALL THE WAY, **Triumph**, from 'Never Surrender' RCA
 - 8 N.I.B., **Black Sabbath**, from 'Live Evil' Vertigo
 - 9 PASSION KILLER, **One The Juggler** EMI 45
 - 10 TAXI DRIVER, **Hanoi Rocks**, from 'Self Destruction Blues'
- Compiled by John Brent, DJ at The Osbourne House, Rochdale Dale, Collyhurst, Manchester.

ALBUMS

- 1 — THUNDER AND LIGHTNING **Thin Lizzy** (Vertigo)
- 2 1 FRONTIERS **Journey** (CBS)
- 3 — PYROMANIA **Def Leppard** (Mercury)
- 4 6 TOTO IV **Toto** (CBS)
- 5 5 HEAVY **Various** (K-Tel)
- 6 4 NEVER SURRENDER **Triumph** (RCA)
- 7 11 THE SINGLES **Jimi Hendrix** (Polydor)
- 8 19 WHAT'S WORDS WORTH **Motorhead** (Big Beat)



- 9 — KILROY WAS HERE **Styx** (A&M)
- 10 3 LIVE EVIL **Black Sabbath** (Vertigo)
- 11 — ROCK GODDESS **Rock Goddess** (A&M)
- 12 24 SINK YOUR TEETH INTO THAT **Talas** (Food For Thought)
- 13 9 GET NERVOUS **Pat Benatar** (Chrysalis)
- 14 28 HERE TO STAY **Neal Schon & Jan Hammer** (CBS)
- 15 2 MAKING CONTACT **UFO** (Chrysalis)
- 16 — ROGER THE ENGINEER **Yardbirds** (Edsel)
- 17 8 CODA **Led Zeppelin** (Swansong)
- 18 — NO GUTS, NO GLORY **Molly Hatchett** (Epic)
- 19 — DAWN PATROL **Nightranger** (Epic)
- 20 23 STRANGE BREW — THE VERY BEST OF CREAM **Cream** (RSO)
- 21 38 POWER IN FUSION **Trance** (Rockport Import)
- 22 13 IN FLIGHT MOVIE **Starfighters** (Jive)
- 23 29 ARRIVE ALIVE **Pallas** (Cool King)
- 24 7 RECORDS **Foreigner** (Atlantic)
- 25 17 TIME TO TURN **Eloy** (HM Worldwide)
- 26 10 WORLDS APART **Saga** (Portrait)
- 27 12 THREE LOCK BOX **Sammy Hagar** (Geffen)
- 28 20 SELF-DESTRUCTION BLUES **Hanoi Rocks** (Johanna)
- 29 18 RACING TIME **SanTERS** (HM)
- 30 14 "FROM THE MAKERS OF..." **Status Quo** (Vertigo)
- 31 16 HUGHES THRALL **Hughes & Thrall** (Epic)
- 32 15 THE DISTANCE **Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band** (Capitol)
- 33 21 SAINTS AND SINNERS **Whitesnake** (Liberty)
- 34 27 TALK OF THE DEVIL **Ozzy Osbourne** (Jet)
- 35 25 DEATH PENALTY **Witchfinder General** (HM)
- 36 — ONWARD AND UPWARD **Head East** (A&M Import)
- 37 31 RESTLESS AND WILD **Accept** (CNR Import)
- 38 22 TWO X S **Nazareth** (NEMS International)
- 39 30 FLAT OUT **Buck Dharma** (Portrait)
- 40 26 LEAVES IN THE WIND **Paul Kossoff** (Street Tunes)

IMPORT ALBUMS

- 1 4 POWER IN FUSION **Trance** (Rockport)
- 2 — ONWARD AND UPWARD **Head East** (A&M)
- 3 3 RESTLESS AND WILD **Accept** (CNR)
- 4 7 GREAT WHITE **Great White** (Aegean)
- 5 5 TANÉ CAIN I11 **Tané Cain** (RCA)
- 6 — DANCING WITH DANGER **Streethart** (Capitol)
- 7 — VIRGIN STEELE **Virgin Steele** (VS)
- 8 6 LIVE **Riot** (Elektra)
- 9 — CUT **Golden Earring** (Mercury)
- 10 10 MINI-LP **Kim Mitchell** (Anthem)

Compiled by MRIB

KERRANG!

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RANGERS IN THE NIGHT

Guitarists 'burning' JEFF WATSON and 'warbling' BRAD GILLIS explain the NIGHT RANGER philosophy to LAURA CANYON

IN A large wooden warehouse down on Sunset Boulevard, the other end of the street from where the Moral Majority's billboard screams its warning of the Evils of Heavy Metal, the people have gathered together on a cold Sunday afternoon. Outside the wind is howling. But from the bowels of the warehouse comes a more unearthly sound: the murmur of young worshippers waiting for the vision to appear. The place is silent. A handful of people in satin jackets are preparing for the ceremony. The people simply stare at the empty altar piled with silver speakers and instruments of steel. At last five men appear and the murmur turns into a shout. And from the speakers comes a sweet killer chord

loud enough to make your ears weep with joy! Several witnesses later swear they saw the Moral Majority billboard start to shake and quiver on its foundations half a mile away . . .

Night Ranger have got it—they proved it at this odd afternoon gathering at S.I.R. rehearsal studios, rented for the purpose of recording a show before 200 HM fans to broadcast over American radio—and if you've got it, flaunt it. I've seen these 'special' shows before, and usually that's just what they're not—neither special nor showy. Night Ranger tore up the place, strutting and blistering across the warehouse stage with some of the classiest and LOUDEST American power-rock I've heard in ages. They've got melodies your mother could hum in the kitchen, sure, but there's not a wimp amongst them. It's like sticking some sweet, cute little toy puppy in front of you

and coming up behind it with a blowtorch!

And this is a band from San Francisco. Yes, San Francisco! Journey, Doobies, Starship, need I go on? Most bands from the hippy North are about as Heavy Metal as films about children and kittens.

"I think," thinks Jeff Watson, he of the long blond hair, axe-hero posing and 'burning' guitar, "this is a little heavier than most of the bands you just mentioned. I think a lot of that has to do with having two guitars."

The player of that other guitar, curly-haired, blond Sammy Hagar lookalike Brad Gillis, the 'warbling' axe man, nods in agreement. "We're the ones that stick this band in the heavy direction. If you were to take away Jeff and I, you'd still have the songs—good songs—but I don't think we'd draw the power Metal pop fans that we do. Hell, I don't know *what* the band would sound like if we weren't here!"

"They couldn't replace us," Jeff protests. "We like to think we're irreplaceable. I am. If I left, Brad try to cover my stuff? Wow!"

Okay boys, make it a nice clean fight. Queen's rules . . .

"No," laughs axe hero number one. "We get along real well."

One way they've avoided bloodshed is by agreeing to be different but equal. No Priestly dual guitar attacks for them, they take it in turns to show off.

"We split the solos evenly through the whole album," says Jeff, "depending on the song. And we practice a lot together, work out parts. We've got two different styles which are very complimentary to each other, so it's real good. We enjoy each other's playing."

Brad's style—which managed to peek out from amongst the necessary Randy Rhoads-isms in Ozzy's band, where he spent eight months prior to Night Ranger—is "kind of off-the-wall



wang-bar try-something-new. I wanted to do something new, different, so I got a tremelo bar and tried playing with all the harmonies and stuff and now it's like part of me. When we went in to do the album, it was pretty much my trademark. And Jeff went out there and just burned and did the fast licks. I warble, he burns."

"Mine," says Jeff, "is more of a fast picking technique."

"Fast pissing?" says Brad. "He does everything fast. Ask his girlfriend."

"And then," Jeff is unfazed. "I have the eight finger technique I'm now doing on the neck, the hem run thing which is working real well. It's taking a long time to develop but it's coming round finally to where it's working a lot. I don't see anyone else doing it yet, so I hope that can become one of my trademarks."

Jeff's previous outfit was the modestly-titled Jeff Watson Band, a good draw in Sacramento (home of Steel Breeze and California's politicians and not much else) for three years.

"I never had a Brad Gillis band!" digs axe man number two.

"It was appropriate." Jeff

explains, "because I put the band together, did all the press for it and got us into the studio and on the air."

When that got to be too much a headache, he called up Sammy Hagar to tell him about a brilliant earth-shattering guitarist he'd heard of, just right for Sammy's band. Himself. He didn't get the job.

"I tried out for it but I guess I was a little too over-rambunctious (*what?—Ed*) for Sammy's tastes at the time. He wanted a more laid-back guitar player and I didn't want to subdue my solos." Sammy? Laid-back? "Well he wanted to do most of the soloing, and he didn't want a guitar player who was better than him, so I didn't get the gig!"

Hmm, them's fighting words. Especially when Night Ranger are opening act on Sammy's latest U.S. tour!

"It'll be wonderful!" swears Jeff. "We talk all the time, sure."

"It's going to be real weird!" grins Brad. "Sammy's going to give me shit because I look like him!"

"He's told us we can't wear red clothes onstage," says Jeff.

Brad: "He saw the video and I was wearing red and I had a red guitar and he said: 'hey, no red onstage'. I'm going to go and buy me some yellow pants."

Talking of yellow makes me think of canaries which makes me think of biting the little things head off which makes me think of: *Ozzy Osbourne*.

"That never happened while I was on tour with him," says Brad. "None of that stuff. It all happened before I joined the band. All we really did was hang a midget . . . I saw all sides of Ozzy, the crazy side, the mellow side, and all in all he was an all-round guy, a little of everything. Basically, he's very down to earth, very sincere, and he really cares a lot for his players. But onstage sometimes he gets a little wild and gets carried away."

What was Ozzy looking for when he took Brad on? A Randy Rhoads copy?

"Yeah, I think he wanted me to resemble Randy in style of playing, just so the audience could relate to it. He didn't want somebody to come in and turn all the songs around. I knew that when I joined the band, and when I was rehearsing in my room in New York learning all the songs, I knew pretty much what I had to do: take the the basic format of what Randy did. On the solos I'd start out like Randy, then go on in my own style and maybe end up in the same style as him. But I didn't want to play him note for note—no, not because it's boring. It's very exciting music that Randy did. But I felt bad doing that."

Brad left Ozzy for Night Ranger partly because at the time no-one was sure whether he'd be kept on as a full-time member (Ozzy asked him to stay when he'd already given in his notice and committed himself to Night Ranger) and partly being an

equal member in a young group had more to offer than being a hired hand. What's Night Ranger got that Ozzy hasn't?

"I think this band has fresh energy, a lot of new songs, and the chance for me to do something original and good."

And it's got Ozzy's seal of approval. Though the band can't confirm this because of such music biz rubbish as contracts and the like, the 'rumour' that the Ozzy popped in to the L.A. studio where they were recording their debut album 'Dawn Patrol' and crooned a couple of backing vocals is true.

"He and Sharon hung out with us for a night. I think he likes it." And we all know that Ozzy doesn't go for wimp rock.

"Exactly. We were going for a heavier direction," says Brad. "We could have stayed light and ended up copping out and going for Top 40 material but we thought, no-one's going to be happy doing that. We'd already done it once, Jack and I, and we're not going to cop out and do it again. And Fitz had been playing with Gamma and Hagar and he was into the heavy stuff, and Kelly liked to bang his drums, and Jeff was always a Heavy Metal player, and it just seemed natural to us to go in that direction. And in the two weeks of rehearsal before we went into the studio, we weeded out all the songs that weren't happening and derived the style we have now. We went for a big ballsy power pop Metal sound on the album. Metal powerpop 80s concert rock, we call it."

Full marks for those who noticed three as yet unmentioned musicians in the last paragraph. Jack Blades (lead singer, bassist and songwriter), Kelly Keagy (drummer, vocalist and songwriter) and Alan 'Fitz' Fitzgerald (keyboards player, one-time sideman with Ronnie Montrose and Sammy Hagar, the man who first offered Night Ranger access to recording equipment and the man who introduced Jeff to the band). Jack and Kelly had been in a band called Stereo with Brad, and before that the three of them were half of the funk rock band Rubicon.

So what are nice funk boys like this doing in a band like Night Ranger?

"I was the rock and roll influence in Rubicon," says Brad. "If I hadn't been there, it would have been a real funk thing. The reason I joined that band is because I knew they were cutting an album; I was just playing in bars and I knew I had to get out of that, so I used it as a vehicle to get out of the clubs and get out there professionally."

"I was 19 years old, yet I was able to cut an album and release a single, and we started to do real well. I was still a young pup and my parents were all happy to see I was actually going somewhere. But in my heart I knew that really wasn't where I was at. So I rode it out for the two or three years we were together. We did two albums, the second one stiffed,

and Jack and I stuck together after that band broke up. Kelly joined towards the end because the drummer in Rubicon split, and the three of us stayed together. That's when we got Fitz and Jeff and just tried a new approach."

New? When they're old pros? Not so much of the old, they glare!

"I think," says Jeff, "We're all fresh blood to an extent. We're not all old seasoned players and we haven't been out doing it every night for the last 10 years. We're all pretty fresh. We've had experience in the studio and onstage, enough to be comfortable there, but we haven't done it so much we're burned out on it. So we can get up there and still have new energy, but be pro enough not to screw up."

They've never had to play to eight people and their mother in some dingy club. From the start they've been billed with the big names in the biggest arenas. Friends in Montrose and Hagar's bands helped get them on bills with Gamma, the Doobies, Santana, Judas Priest, you name it. Bill Graham stuck them on his line-ups.

At one time, two and a half years ago, they were called Ranger; a name they changed when they found a country and western band in Kentucky with the same label that had "been around for generations". After a time of being nameless, they settled on Night Ranger.

"Everyone went ah-poo, we hate it. But after a while it kind of seemed an obvious name," says Brad. "It grew on us. You know like a wart . . ."

After making tons of demos and "getting passed up by every major company in the world", they finally got a deal with Boardwalk, the label Joan Jett's on. They stuck out a single, the catchy 'Don't Tell Me You Love Me', and already look like having their first hit.

So who buys Night Ranger records?

"A lot of girls," grins Brad. "We seem to draw a lot of girls and a lot of guitar players for sure."

Jeff: "Tough guitar-playing women! We've generally had about a 50/50 male/female audience which we're real happy about."

"Real happy," says Brad. "Because me being with Ozzy, I was used to 90 per cent young guys."

Talking of which, there's plenty hanging around waiting to get their autographs after the session, which is what Jack, Fitz and Kelly have been doing for the past 45 minutes. So a final question. What's Night Ranger got that the other new American HM bands haven't?

Brad: "I think we've got good 80s rock songs with two burning guitar players that have identifiable styles and also play well together, and great musicians, and I think we've got a good looking band."

Jeff: "I couldn't have said it better!"



Pic Chris Walter

ACID BURNS!

WE WANT to present you/A large wall of sound/But also we warn you/You're dead when you're found/Being dressed up for evil/We do not fear/If you're a believer/You'd better take care.
(from 'Acid')

IF BELGIAN rockers played their music the way the Belgian national side played their football (remember the debacle of last year's World Cup?), then doubtless we'd have been doomed to forever wander through a mouldy mire of mediocrity – a true case of GRIM and bear it!

But, of course, Belgian rockers don't play their music in any similar fashion to their soccer idols (sic). Rather Belgian rockers do not play! Now, come on, sit down and give me a list of internationally accepted Benelux bands. You can't can you? Indeed a genuine Belgian combo that even gets a namecheck outside of their native portals is thinner on the ground than the audience for TV-AM.

In fact, after long and hard consultations with my record collection, I've only managed to come up with two recent names worth mentioning. Firstly, there was Plastic Bertrand, whom you might recall had a mini-chart success with a nonsense ditty entitled 'Ca Plane Pour Moi' about five years ago (best described as Jilted John meets Captain Sensible at Ostend Airport). And more recently there's been Machiavel, whom EMI have done their level best to convince those of us who enjoy a pomp or two with a pint of rock are in the same class as Saga (which, of course, they're not).

But, as for genuine 'hammer-down-the-axe' bands, there's been nary a sighting. Until now... Acid could well be the act to change all preconceptions on la roc Belgique.

My first encounter with 'em came via their debut platter, self-titled and on their own Giant label. How can I best invoke the emotions of this formidable vinyl feast? Well, if you've ever wondered what it would be like to mix yourself a slammin' cocktail of concentrated sulphuric acid and TNT, tarry no more! In a strictly aural sense this is the reply to your prayers (sic) – a devil's answer all wrapped up in stomach-pumping iron.

As someone recently suggested, Acid indeed would seem to be Belgium's answer to both Venom and Mercyful Fate. Their music may, as yet, lack pedigree and poise, but it has an irresistible mongrel bit to it – rabid metal lives, run to the vet!

This is true pulp horror/rock in the tradition of film cult Sam Raimi. Tracks such as 'Hell On Wheels', 'Ghostriders', and 'Heaven's Devils' ride roughshod over subtlety, giving everything to the pursuit of 'Hubble-Bubble-Toil-And-Rubble' – Grimm's Scarey Tales, indeed!

'With Acid in front of you/you'll forget the other bands/When we strike for mad/Power Supply On it's way'. (Heaven's Devils).

But, are Acid in the crawling flesh every bit as EVIL as they appear to be on vinyl? Do they have the burning desire to rip yawning holes in skulls as do both Cronos's legion of dread, and King Diamond's tribe of torment? The answer to these and other questions lay not in the refined pastures of Kerrang's orchestra-pit of typewriters, but rather lurking in the Belgian shadows.

Which is where snaphsmith Fin Costello and myself, clutching our strings of garlic and personal blessing of bludgeon from the Bishop of Bonutto, headed for an expected Exorcist-style confrontation with these five foreign furies. The harrowing details follow below – enter if ye dare!

Brugges (headquarters of the Acid regime) is a neat, picturesque town, the sort to be found on the continent as frequently as drunk journalists in the Marquee. Somehow, the ravages of technology have passed by this quaint pinprick without even a half-hearted attempt at raping the landscape.

And surprisingly, Acid fitted perfectly into this scenario of bliss. Polite, friendly, nay courteous persons, they hardly seemed like yer average satanist, the sort who queue menacingly in Tesco's with their packet of fire-and-brimstone flavoured corn flakes! But, therein lies the rub. For in reality Acid are no more demonic than, say, Bucks Fizz.

If you read carefully through their lyrics, what you'll find is that the invocation of the Devil is used purely for imagery and effect. Primarily, the band's subject-matter is divisible into two parts: an obsession with motor-bikes (therefore by association, with death), and the most earthy form of sweaty sex imaginable.

These are themes which crop up again and again in songs like 'Hell On Wheels' ('They're heading for the suicide war/ Eighty tons of heavy armed steel/ Won't hold them from burning in hell'). In truth, therefore, Acid have more in common with ancient paganistic beliefs such as Baal and Ashtaroth, than with

Satanism, because as with these 'religions', the most basic animalistic taboos of civilised society are brought out into the open, and paraded as glorious trophies – death and sex. Time and space precludes me from further expounding on this idea, but it's certainly something on which Acid lead guitarist Demon (well, if the China Rogue guitarist can get away with calling himself Sleighmaker...) seemed ready to agree.

"I certainly am not a Satanist, nor are any members of the band. And we don't preach such things in our music. Our lyrics are used to express the things you've mentioned such as sex, which we're all very much in favour of, and the power of motor-bikes. In fact, I got a real shock when somebody went into print recently calling Acid a Belgian Venom. There's a world of difference between us as bands."

"We supported Venom in Belgium not so long ago, and I actually asked their drummer, Abaddon, how his god, the Devil was. You know what he told me? 'Oh, yeah, I really do worship him'. Tilt's crazy, and has got nothing to do with us whatsoever. Venom were nice bastards, though, but a little too Sabbath for my tastes. None of us in Acid like their first LP, but the second one, now that was good. Still, any band who drinks as much as they do, can't be all bad."

"But that stage show of theirs, it really scared me. After two numbers, they'd let off so many smokebombs and flashes, you couldn't see the stage for smoke – it was a real mess. Acid approach live work very differently. We use only two sets of double flash-bombs, and go in for minimal effects. It's the music that's most important to us."

"But I must tell you. I've got a great idea for a stage show, when we get enough money. What we'll do is have the entire stage converted into a graveyard, with five graves placed in a semi-circle at the front facing the audiences, and all sorts of gloomy images in the back-ground. The tension will be steadily built up by some suitable organ music, to create a real horror atmosphere. Then just as it reaches a peak, and everybody expects a huge climax... we'll get a scrawny chicken to suddenly appear and cluck through a microphone! It'll be hilarious."

So how on earth did good ole Lucifer get into the Acid song structures?

"I dunno. One day, I sat down and did a song called 'Hell On Wheels', which was the first Acid number, and I just wrote down the first thing to come into my

head. Satan just kinda turned up, you know," confessed Demon.

In the late seventies, there existed in Brugges a rather forgettable soft-in-the-head rock outfit called Precious Page, which sounds like it should have been the name of Jimmy's latest solo project, but was actually (if Demon's description is accurate) more like a Belgian Eagle.

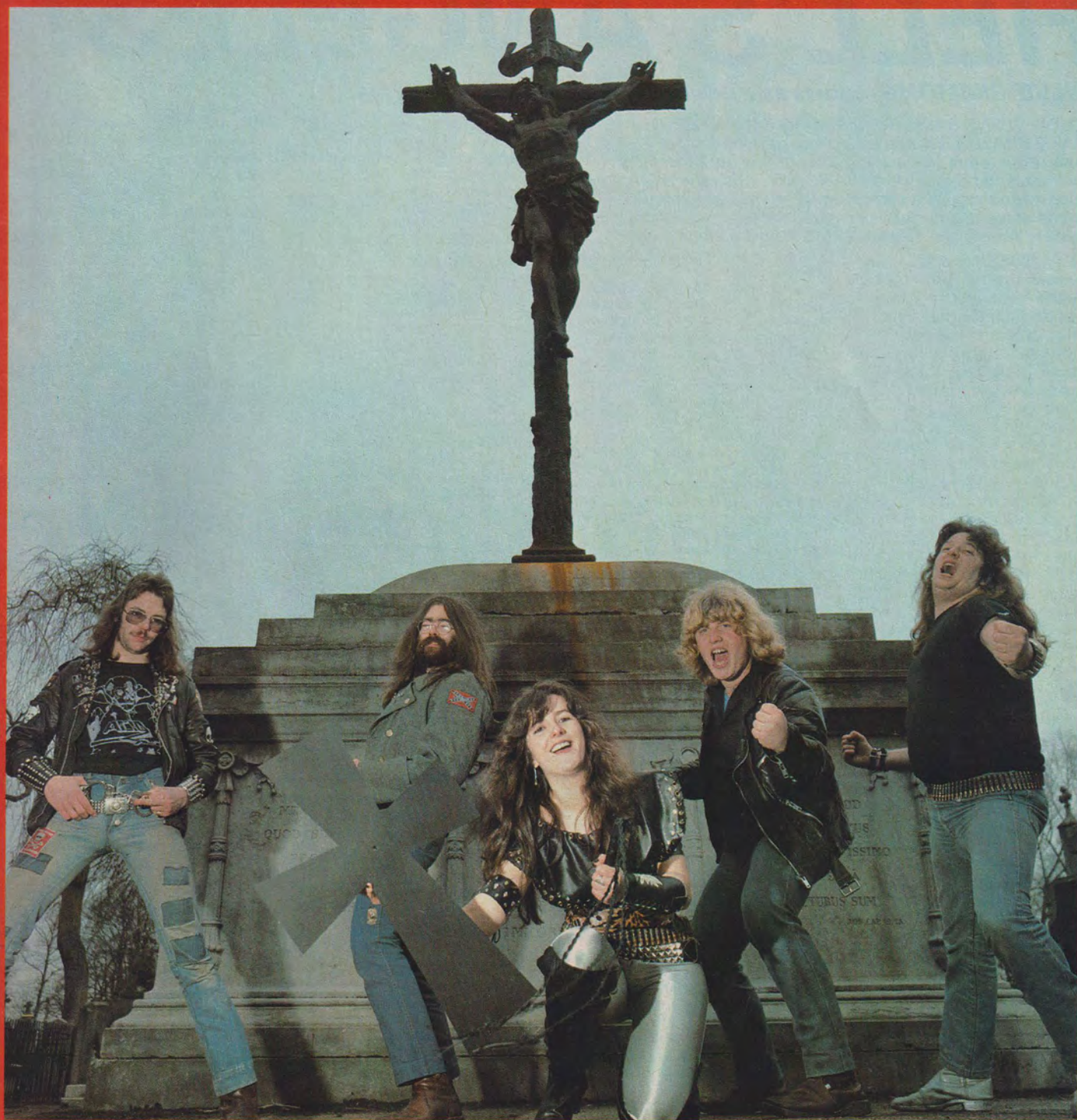
Determined to give vent to their dormant spirit of rock 'n' roll, Demon, and Precious cohorts T-Bone (bass – a man whose ambition is to play live in California's Death Valley)/Kate (vocals) broke away to form Acid. "Actually, I gotta admit, Satan made me do it" explained Demon, tongues firmly in both cheeks. "He's a nice fella, Satan. Lives just around the corner from us! Anyway, the three of us got fed up with Precious Page, and wanted to do something heavier. We found a real tough drummer in Anvill, and just sat down to play some music."

Having added second guitarist Dizzy Lizzy in mid-1981 (the band were officially formed in the winter of the previous year), they cut a self-financed single, coupling up 'Hooked On Metal'/'Hell On Wheels'. Badly recorded, it nonetheless captured the favourable attentions of Luc Van Den Bossche, proprietor of a local Brugges record shop (Bilbo), where the group would frequently hang out. Suitably impressed with their potential, he took a fateful gamble by putting them into a studio to cut a full-blown album, the aforementioned 'Acid'.

And since then things have grown apace. There's no doubting the Belgians have a very promising future. And much of this is due to the very lovely Kate. Almost a deadringer visually for Girlschool's Kim MacAuliffe, she has the raunchy looks of those lusty pretty maidens Christopher Lee would regularly bite into a coffin during the halcyon days of Hammer Dracula movies. As for her voice, she's the type of torrential throat specialist who can be classed as a genuine heavy metallurgist.

But... the obvious question is – can a band like Acid actually get away with a female front, however enticing she might be?

"Why the hell not? She's as good as anyone else, male or female," is the Demon retort. "She has already been accepted without problem by our fans in Belgium, because they know she's so into the music. She doesn't just go on-stage and sell her body to the fans in a cheap fashion like Betsy of Bitch or Wendy O. Williams (shame!). Kate can sing."



Pic Fin Costello

AC/DC

HELL'S ANGELES!

SYLVIE SIMMONS reports as a heavy metal storm hits California*

'LOONY TEENS BASH THEIR BRAINS OUT IN SICKO DANCE CRAZE. Like jungle beats gone bonkers, our freaked-out teens are bashing their brains out over a sick new dance fad called 'HEADBANGING'. And now this mania called handbanging is sweeping the world, leaving untold dozens of teenagers dead or maimed forever'. (From a report in America's 'Weekly World News' paper)

ALL ACROSS the city, between the swimming pools and the freeways, the palm trees and the joggers, the Valley girls and the surfers, when the California sun flops down through the thick orange smog and the temperature drops below boiling, tens of hundreds of believers are shoe-horning themselves into leather, tugging on Angelwitch-patched denim, picking up guitars and cranking out powerchords that could melt the Smiley sticker off a Trans Am bumper! While New York is off into rock disco, in Los Angeles the raised fist, the studded belt and HEADBANGING are becoming a way of life.

"For God's sake," wailed Chris Stein of Blondie when he last popped west, "is that all you people in L.A. want to hear? Aggressive lyrics and a raging guitar?" As any true HM fan would answer: what other kind of lyrics are there? What other kind of guitar?

L.A., as I've said before, isn't such an odd HM breeding ground as you might think, with its no-drinks-under-21 rules, plentiful quaaludes and laid-back image. The old laid-back bit comes in handy for giving you the time to sit back and grow your hair long, then sit back some more and listen to 30-minute guitar solos!

And since I last checked in on the HM clubs here—some as clean and sterile as an operating theatre, some as dark and damp and sleazy as Lemmy's trousers (the Valley West for example, former HM haven, was closed down for drug and prostitution trafficking!)—it looks like that newspaper article was right. Headbanging, in L.A. at least, is definitely on the increase.

The number of bands (around 50) is about the same. A handful have fallen by the wayside in the past year, but they've been replaced by punk groups who've learned to play their instruments and moved on to Metal. Though spandex (thank the lord!) is on the downside along with the amount of David Lee Roth impersonators, there's still to some extent an unwillingness to try anything new and original. But LA's got some of the best Scorpions, Iron Maiden and Judas Priest impersonators this side of the Atlantic, along with some bands who've adapted that

influence into a powerful sound of their own.

And though the good venues are dwindling, the audiences are growing. Younger kids; kids with excellent taste in music, who boo the Styx videos and cheer the Iron Maiden ones when they get shown between bands at the usual triple-whammy HM package nights in the clubs around town. Out of town too. For the first time since Van Halen and partly thanks to Mötley Crüe, LAHM is getting exported out of the state and corrupting young children everywhere! "This mania called HEADBANGING is sweeping the world."!!

"There's a hardcore HM and there's an LAHM as opposed to that, which is much more pop than being straightforward HM. Like a Motorhead as opposed to a Scorpions-meets-Loverboy. It's either red and white spandex and shirts and little striped pants and things like that... or black leather, handcuffs and chains." (Bitch).

The bands we checked out (probably not the entire LAHM bunch, but with so many of them virtually underground, popping off their day jobs once in a while to go into a demo studio or check out the competition, it was all we could track down with a few thrown in by hearsay) do tend to fall rather neatly into Bitch's categories. You'll either see more hairsprayed poodle cuts than at Sassoon's dog-grooming salon, or more whips and studs and leather than an S&M bar on a Saturday night, pretty evenly divided right down the middle, with the odd variation on the theme (a dash of Alice Cooper here, an Angel costume there) for luck.

Next issue we'll be looking in depth at some of the most interesting bands, but meanwhile here's a run down of the rest in alphabetical order: The good (✓) the bad (✗) the ugly (U) the so-so (%) and the dead (+).

A LA CARTE (%) The musical equivalent of that bloke who's been trying to row all the way to Australia for the past couple of years and ends up going nowhere. A blues-boogie type band who play pretty well, if only the wouldn't play like Foghat. Still gig pretty regularly.

ANGELES (✗) Hollywood heavy metal straight off the Benny Hill show. Exaggerated brightness and colour and enthusiasm and oozing spandex. The music matches. If you see them wear sunglasses and earplugs.

ANVIL CHORUS (✓) Good stuff: intricate, quasi-70s, distinctive progressive HM. Evidently played by schizophrenics—the single they've just released on Leviathan Records ("Blondes In Black") is the absolute opposite; commercial pop—HM.

AUGUST REDMOON (✗) Someone must have given this bunch ballet lessons. They keep twirling round the stage and synch-dancing, never keeping still. Don't blame them—best to be on the move to avoid the people who want to off them after hearing their record! "Fools Are Never Alone", their EP on Arm Records, is a very pro-looking job, with a great sleeve and red vinyl, but the music's utter rubbish and the sound excruciating.

BEOWULF (+) The band that used to be LA's nearest thing to Iron Maiden broke up two weeks after their album "Slice Of Life" was released. R.I.P.

BITCH (✓) Trying to sum this lot up in a sentence is like trying to list Britt Ekland's boyfriends on one page. A four piece fronted—no pun intended—by the ravishing Betsy, who does things onstage with whips and chains, gets ravaged by a guitar neck, and gets dirty letters from fans. Influences: Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden. Supposedly the first LA band to use black leather and handcuffs, they did publicity pictures in a notorious LA S&M bondage bar. An EP's already available; an album "Be My Slave" on Metal Blade is due in the Spring.

BLACK & BLUE (✓) From up north in Oregon, but moved to LA where their black leather and shag hairdos wouldn't get them shot. Heard a great demo by them, with songs like "Violent Kid", real heavy riff and almost punk chant, and "Chains Around Heaven". Good, solid HM.

CIRITH UNGOL (✗) A good idea—Gothic HM with great flyposters stuck around town featuring two skeletons knelt in praise—but not such a good band. They always sound lethargic and diluted. Still they've got a new album coming out—"Kings of the Dead"—which they guarantee is "100% heavier" than their last one, so I'm willing to change my mind.

DAMIEN (U) Based down in suburban Orange County and hard to track down, I can only go by what I've heard (basic neanderthal) and what I've seen (a picture showing them all leather, chains and hair). Their bass player, Don Costa's, supposedly joined Ozzy's band.

DEMON FLIGHT (%) An okay, early Sabbath sort of sound, they've got an EP out on Thunderbolt/Metal Blade, nice blood-on-black cover and titles like "Dead of the Night" and

"Flight of the Demon". Still I'm not quite convinced; probably because they're really just an occasional studio band and don't get into the guts of gigging.

DIETRICH (%) Not as mysterious as the name suggests, though it's a mystery to me why they've based their HM around the Doors of all people. They have an EP out on their own label.

DÖKKEN (✓) Låt's här it för bänds with ömlauts. Guitarist George Lynch has a bit of a history. Comes from Germany and claims to have taught Randy Rhoads a few tricks on the Axe; supposedly got his old job with Ozzy Osbourne, flew to England and got sent back out to LA again. His band had good material, but put it on hold because Lynch was on a Don Dökken solo LP released in Europe on Carrere. The band was rumoured to be doing an LP for CBS, but CBS know nothing about it. Should be good once it comes.

DU BROW (+) Changed its name back to the more well-known Quiet Riot. A good resurrection.

FURY (%) Hard to judge them at the moment. The band's going through a lot of changes—including possibly their name, as someone with a similar moniker is taking them to court. Some good basic HM, but mostly on the commercial side.

GREAT WHITE (%) They used to be called Dante Fox, and have just released a good, standard LA hard rock EP produced by Don Dokken and the guy who engineered the original Mötley Crüe album. Sad to say they've lost their best member, the bass player—all chains and hair, who used to whip inanimate objects onstage, spit at the speakers and take an axe to his instrument; he's the one who got the job with Ozzy.

HYKSOS (U) Suburbanites again. Supposedly look and sound like spacey Sabs.

IMAGES (+) A bunch of loud, psychedelic cavemen who sadly disappeared after their neanderthal frontman was hauled off to jail for some reason.

JOSHUA (✗) Led by a guitarist of the same name, this lot don't seem to have the foggiest what they want to do. Sometimes they're HM, sometimes commercial wimps. Put an ad in the local mag recently saying: "Tired of HM? Come see Joshua with melodies, smooth sounds, beautiful harmonies". And they still have a following!

LAZER (✗) Horrible! Hollywood HM with the odd nod to San Franciscan wimps Journey.

MALICE (✓) Definite winners in the Judas Priest lookalike contest. Guitarist Jay's a double

Continues Page 20

METALLICA

"We're a bit too heavy and intense for the LA crowd . . . people are billing us as the heaviest US metal band."



from page 18

for KK with the long blond hair and Flying V etc. The singer even looks like Halford — and is starting to go thin on top! Musically Priest's one of the big influences, but they've turned it into a distinctive, pro, class A HM band sound. Very powerful live and get good responses. One suggestion: a little more diversity in the material, otherwise great.

MEDUSA (✓) Probably the truest HM band in the city. Excessive, heavy and over the top with thick Sabbathian riffs and a guitarist who wears an executioner's mask like Thunderstick, they're getting a good following. You should see the groupies! Mostly for male fans, Medusa's only problems are with its lead singer. They're auditioning for a new one right now.

METALLICA (✓) They're moving up North to San Francisco because they're sick to death of

the cutesy girls and spandex they reckon's prevalent among LA audiences. Which should give you some idea of what they're like. They've broken in a new bass player — ex Trauma — and may be doing an LP in the Spring with SF's Shrapnel Records.

OVERKILL (%) Basic garage-band stuff. They were a punk band, then turned HM. The tape I heard was pretty pedestrian, but a new EP on SST — "Hell's Getting Hotter" — isn't bad at all.

PANDEMONIUM (%) Not much going on here; though I'm liable to get lynched for saying so by their mostly female fans who think they're "cute". Actually they look a lot like Def Leppard. The band comes from Alaska but moved down here to get warmed up a bit. Their music's not that hot yet, though better on record (there's a track on the local "Metal Massacre" compilation album) than live.

QUIET RIOT (✓) Quiet Riot's always had a big following, even before Randy and Rudy were Ozzy-traced from the band. It's straight-ahead fairly heavy rock, well played and commercial enough to get them a deal with CBS. They've got a new player, ex Snow.

ROUGH CUTT (✓) Commercial, professional adult hard rock. The American way. The band's album's being produced by Ronnie James Dio, whose wife is managing them. One of the members was in Ronnie's old (yes older than Sabs!) band Elf. Little things mean a lot.

SARGE (x) A poor man's Ratt, street-level stuff. For some odd reason they've got a military image, drinking booze out of canteens and wearing army fatigues. Someone ought to call them up.

SAVAGE GRACE (%) Live not so good, but they've got a not unpleasant Euro HM sound, with shades of Judas Priest once again.

SHARKS (x) They've got a drum with a set of sharks' teeth sticking out. It's the only interesting thing I can remember about them.

SNOW (+) They once headlined over Van Halen and used more hairspray than Mötley Crüe, and even put out their own Van Halen soundalike EP. Now they're dead and gone, their guitarist snapped up by Quiet Riot.

SOUND BARRIER (✓) This is different: an all-black HM band. Not surprisingly, the guitarist is into Hendrix, and the overall sound is intricate, interesting, mid-70s sounding HM. An album's due out on MCA.



BLACK 'N BLUE

EDITION



SLAYER (U) What do I know? They couldn't be bothered to return the calls. By reputation they're so-so Iron Maiden-type HM.

SMILE (%) Like A La Carte they've been around for ages, don't seem to be doing much in particular, and have a blues-based HM sound.

STEPMOTHERS (✓) Used to be punks, might well be still for that matter, but have a wonderful raw Motorhead sort of sound live. A street-level denim bunch with a big following.

TANTRUM (%) The first all-girl LAHM band, consisting of an ex Orchid, a Mötley Crüe girlfriend and a couple more. When I saw them they were pretty promising if new, but have since seemingly disappeared off the face of the earth.

THIRD STAGE ALERT (%) Sound like early Rainbow and have a Ritchie Blackmore lookalike on rhythm guitar.

VIOLATION (✓) What a mixture! A lead guitarist who looks, moves and plays like Michael Schenker, and an overall sound like northern heroes Y&T. They're based in San Francisco, but come down pretty regularly to L.A. for gigs, always worth catching. There's a single on VIR records called "Meet Me At Midnight", co-produced by Y&T's Leonard Haze.

WHITE SISTER (x) The horror the horror! A band that looks like Angel and sounds like Journey! They've been together under different names since the late 70s. White Sister – which goes with their bland sound – was the one they settled on two years ago. A quote: "The aggressive, negative side of hard rock has been pushed for a long time. We just want to show people songs that deal with the better side of human nature... We don't do drugs, every third word out of our mouths isn't 'fuck' and we don't advocate that kids go out and hang their parents." A suitable case for hanging.

WILD DOGS (✓) Proof that Y&T wasn't a fluke, San Francisco's come up with another excellent metal band. Good, distinctive sound and fine songs. There'll be an album out on Shrapnel Records in February, and they're featured on the "US Metal II" compilation. All very competent musicians, with special praise to the guitar player who's got some nice special sound effects.

XITER (+) L.A.'s nearest thing to Raven and fronted by a female tougher than any male HMer around, they were going to head for England to record, but broke up instead. Guitarist George Lynch shifted to Döken.

NEXT ISSUE we'll be taking an in-depth look at the best of the LA bands including WARLORD and WASP....

ALBUMS

from page 11
the band drawing closer to the western Canadian sound characterised by Loverboy and Chiliwack; their characteristic breathless energy has been shaped into something more conventional. The album was actually recorded with Aldo Nova's drummer Billy Carmassi, although Herb Ego remains part of the road band, and the difference in style is clearly relevant to the change – but is probably only a consequence of a decision already made.

But having said all that, and in effect mourned the demise of a uniquely exciting identity, it's got to be said that this album is a clear winner. Streetheart are rougher than ever before, and properly produced for the first time – by Pasha's Spencer Proffer. They still bounce, full of excitement and exuberance, but with a fuller, more conventional sound, and Jeff Neill is emerging as a stunningly effective guitarist in the process. He's concise and savage, notably with the gaunt attack of the opening title track or the biting interjections on the rippling drive of 'Underground'. The keyboards of Daryl Guthrie are colourful and economic, and the pair work well together in texturing a sound where nobody overplays but there's still plenty going on.

The inevitable rock ballad 'Don't Let Her Leave You' (the radio seems to love rock ballads out west) isn't particularly inspiring, and the commerciality of 'Comin' True' lacks a little character in this carefree manner, but the standards are nevertheless high. 'Night Writer' snipes at the endless stream of rock songs called 'Night Rider' with a paean to graffiti artists that's actually one of the best tracks on the album despite its unlikely subject matter, cool and textured but full of barely restrained power. The killer punch is saved for the end though, an absolute killer called 'Have It Your Way'. Shifting from dark, simmering threat to warm, exuberant bounce, it's beautifully delivered by vocalist Kenny Shields and could easily be picked up on as one of those uniquely individual singles that crosses all boundaries in the vein of a 'Bohemian Rhapsody' or a 'Bridge Over Troubled Water' – imposing, awesome and compulsive. PAUL SUTER

BUCK DHARMA 'Flat Out' (Portrait ARR 38124)

WHILST Blue Oyster Cult catch their breath and decide on their future (if there is to be one), ace axe architect Donald Roeser (alias 'Buck Dharma') has taken the opportunity to vinylise his solo thoughts, whims, and ambitions.

And what emerges, is never innovative or startling, and only occasionally has a distinct charm all its own. Eschewing (whether by design or accident) using his BOC teamsters (with the exception of new drummer Rick Downey, who turns up on three tracks), Roeser instead has gone for a collection of (presumably) old friends and studio hacks.

For the most part, this game plan works only partially well. On the positive side, the wry, semi-truth of 'Born To Rock' (boasting lines like 'On the night I was born / They had the radio on / ... The station kept a 'rockin' / I was born on number nine') allows

the Roeser gut-guitar to lay a destructive depth-charge through the coasting rhythms of bassist Dennis Dunaway / drummer Neal Smith. 'Cold Wind' has an empty despair, whilst 'Wind, Weather & Storm' comes close to recalling first division BOC, with some splendid sax punctuations from Richie Cannata, and the instrumental 'Anwar's Theme' has the hallmark of mystical adventurism from the man's performance plus stunning Downey drumming.

However, there are negative aspects here. For a kick off, it's all too one-paced. Scarcely any of the material raises itself beyond second gear. Hence the overall effect is tame. And Roeser's voice isn't strong enough to cut the cards, let alone shuffle this particular pack. Potential aces, including the above, deserve better in the vocal department than they get. Maybe Roeser should have persuaded Eric Bloom to do some singing.

Overall, 'Flat Out' is one for die-hard BOC freaks who simply can't resist anything with their heroes on it. As for the wider market, it's a case of nice fret-work, shame about the LP!

MALCOLM DOME

QUEEN CITY KIDS 'Black Box' (Epic ARE 38085)

ONE DAY, maybe, someone will inform bands like Queen City Kids that their brand of AOR is doomed before it even starts. Because no matter how competent your guitarists might be, hot the vocals sound, and how hard the rhythm drives, unless you can pen MEMORABLE songs you've no chance, buddy.

And like Shooting Star, Canadian quartet QCK don't, as yet, have the ability to write good, strong numbers. Each of the ten cuts here sounds like any other, which is a great shame, 'cos in doing so, the band's obvious musical qualities are allowed to go to waste. There's little doubt that vocalist Alex Chuaqui CAN sing the leaves off the trees. He's a remarkable cross between Daltrey, Angry Anderson, Lou Gramm, and Steve Perry. Drummer Jeff Germain is also top class, whilst the semi-funky bass lines of John Donnelly are suitably honed to a tee and guitarist Kevin Fyhn has an arrow-head sharpness.

It's so sad, therefore, to see such talents going to pot. Who, after all, NEEDS a poor man's Le Roux. Maybe, what they should do is cut out the song-writing attempts and hire Russ Ballard.

MALCOLM DOME

BREAKER 'In Days Of Heavy Metal' (Iron Head 6982 Import)

'WE FOLLOW the trends of European HM very closely'. Thus goes part of the biography this debut release from Canadian quintet Breaker. Mind you, the band had no real need to put this fact down on paper, just a cursory listen to the three tracks of the first side being more than enough to bring the point home. 'Living Free' is pure Saxon, 'Satan's Lyre' is simply Priest's 'Sinner' re-written and 'Easyrider' could almost be Def Leppard in their 'Getcha Rocks Off' period. In other words, they display absolutely no signs of individuality.

All of which does not auger well for the band's future as there's no real market for mimicry (well played or

not) in the international Metal foundry. However, all is not despair here. Side two, featuring a long concept based around the title track, is much more 'the business'. A Camelot-esque tale of HM chivalry and honour, it has distinct elements of '2112'-period Rush and 'Rock 'N' Roll Machine' Triumph. Yet, here, these influences are used as a launching pad to strong effect. In particular, the pinpoint deftness of lead guitarist Rik Anthony plus the stirring use of vocal harmonies, really does work out very impressively.

If Breaker can stick to this direction, get in a sympathetic producer and show the confidence to break out of Canada, they might just have a promising career ahead.

MALCOLM DOME

GEORGE THOROGOOD & THE DESTROYERS 'Bad To The Bone' (EMI America AML 3024)

GEORGE Thorogood's Rainbow show last year was quite one of the high points of my 1981. He with the three man Destroyers and the smallest, most rudimentary of PA systems contrived to turn that big old cinema into a sweat-stained cellar club with a simple but effective mixture of rough and ready r'n'b and gutbucket blues. A great showman and an even better slide guitarist George Thorogood managed to breathe new life and honesty into those hackneyed routines and proved that there's excitement to be squeezed out of them yet.

Of course, normally you'd expect that kind of live act to pale on plastic but in George Thorogood's case nothing could be further from the truth. Each of his three independently released albums has not only impressed the cognoscenti but also elevated the Delaware Destroyer to gold record status in the United States, Australasia and parts of Europe. And earned him a contract with EMI America.

'Bad To The Bone' is the first album to be released under the new arrangement and it marks no sell-out to US radio formats. In fact, it probably defies them more than any of Thorogood's previous albums, for a harsher, more down-to-earth sound is rarely found on record these days. If anything side one suffers as a result. Its hard-nosed, high energy r'n'b verges on the tuneless – thanks mainly to some very slopping singing by Thorogood himself – and, with the exception of John Lee Hooker's 'New Boogie Chillun', the material is indifferent too.

Side two, on the other hand, is quite exquisite, the title track, a heads down boogie called 'Miss LuAnn' and a fine reading of the slow standard 'As The Years Go By', marking some of the band's best work to date. Thorogood's voice is richly abrasive, his guitar stings and stutters while Hank Carter's saxophone solo could move a statue to tears. Shame about one side.

CHAS DE WHALLEY



JOKERS WILD

**Can Le MAT make it into the Big Time?
"It's on the cards," sez DAVE DICKSON.**

"In the mediaeval pack, the title of the card is Le Mat, adapted from the Italian MATTO, madman or fool... "The Really important feature of this card is that its number should be 0. It represents therefore the Negative above the Tree of Life, the source of all things. It is the Qabalistic Zero. It is the equation of the Universe, the initial and final balance of the opposites..." - 'The Book of Thoth (Egyptian Tarot)' by Aleister Crowley.

IN CHOOSING their name, Le Mat may have stumbled quite unwittingly on the precise definition of themselves that the press has so far failed to discover. Examine that final clause from a book published in 1944: "the initial and final balance of the opposites..." Transfer that from their chosen monicker in the Egyptian Tarot to a modern day rock 'n' roll setting and the parallels remain intact. Le Mat, the band, like Le Mat, the card, are finding balances such diverse and apparently opposite spheres as folk, punk, Heavy Metal and numerous others besides. And that balance could become "the source of all things"; already the band attract an audience of varied musical allegiance, yet each member of that audience comes away satisfied with the sum of all the parts that make up Le Mat's music. Perhaps the "equation of the Universe" has been solved, perhaps it only needed a band like Le Mat to ask the right questions.

But before we get too deep into the underlying philosophy of Le Mat's situation, it might be as well to ask who they are, where they come from and where they're going?

Anyone reading this in Southend will be able to skip forward at this point because Le Mat are big news there (yeah, but so what? Well, everyone's got to start somewhere and the band's following in that area borders on the fanatical, so it does have some bearing!).

The story begins around 1979 when vocalist Gary Simpson, disillusioned with the heavily rhythm & blues influenced music prevalent in Southend, moved on round the coast to Brighton in search of rock 'n' roll glory. There he teamed up with guitarist Pete Helmer, the two meeting at a gig given by the Piranhas, with whom Pete's brother, John, then played.

Alongside Pete was another brother (obviously a musical

family this), Paul, on bass, with Sav, a man of Italian stock but otherwise very English, on drums ("Sav's dad was the only one who could afford a kit!") Some while later, Mark Bonnici joined to bolster the sound with keyboards and his distinctive violin playing. Gary proffered the name 'Le Mat' and at last they were underway.

After doing the rounds of the record companies, a time-honoured practice leading to an aborted deal with NEMS, the band finally signed themselves to a small independent label called *Whaam* who released the impressive 'Waltz Of The Fool' single from the album of the same name. The single proved a moderate but not insignificant success and they followed it's release with a support stint to wait for it, Duran Duran, but were

inexplicably dropped from the tour after only eight dates. So, cornering Gary Simpson over a KitKat and a cup of coffee, we toss some conversation around.

Influences?

"Folk music basically, for me as a writer. I grew up in the folk clubs, that's where I first started singing. It developed from there to r&b and then to rock music, so it was just a progression. And now, having exhausted all the other influences, I've started using folk again."

Is that use of folk in a rock context something new?

"No, we're not totally folk orientated, and I think when we do a song we tend to *attack* it rather than just *play* a folk number."

How did the Duran Duran tour come about?

"It was a band crisis. We told

the management to get us on tour because we weren't playing enough and they had a week to do it or they were sacked. So they phoned up the very next day and said: 'Get your bags together, we're on tour, 24 dates!' Great, great! Who with? 'Duran Duran'. You can't really say 'f*** off! We're not doing that!' because we didn't say *what* tour to get us on! But it was good fun, apart from getting kicked off it."

What were the audiences like?

"Great, no work involved at all, they were willing to be entertained. I'd rather play to people like that who want to listen than some twat who's there to stand against the wall sucking his cheeks in."

Can you learn from a band like Duran Duran?

"Yeahm you can learn how *not* to treat people."

Tell me about the album.

"It was recorded at the Producers Workshop in Fulham Road last summer on a budget of £2000. We only had had 10 days to do it and an afternoon to produce, which isn't really a lot of time; I mean, how do you produce an album in an afternoon?"

"We're not the most proficient musicians in a studio either, we're pretty loose. I don't think we're ever going to be the world's tightest band so there are little bits on the album where mistakes have been left in because I like it to be a bit rough, and we weren't getting that rough edge through the production. The only thing to do was leave a few mistakes in there."

And the tatty-clothed image?

"That's slightly intentional; I like that dirty, lecherous old man look. I like wearing tatty clothes, period costume, too. You see so many leather jackets nowadays, what's the point? There should be something visual as well as auditory coming from the stage to entertain an audience. The image just evolved by accident really."

But I can't help thinking that when Le Mat's deserved success does arrive it won't be through any accident. Rather, it will be down to hard work, determination and more than a fair sprinkling of talent and showmanship.

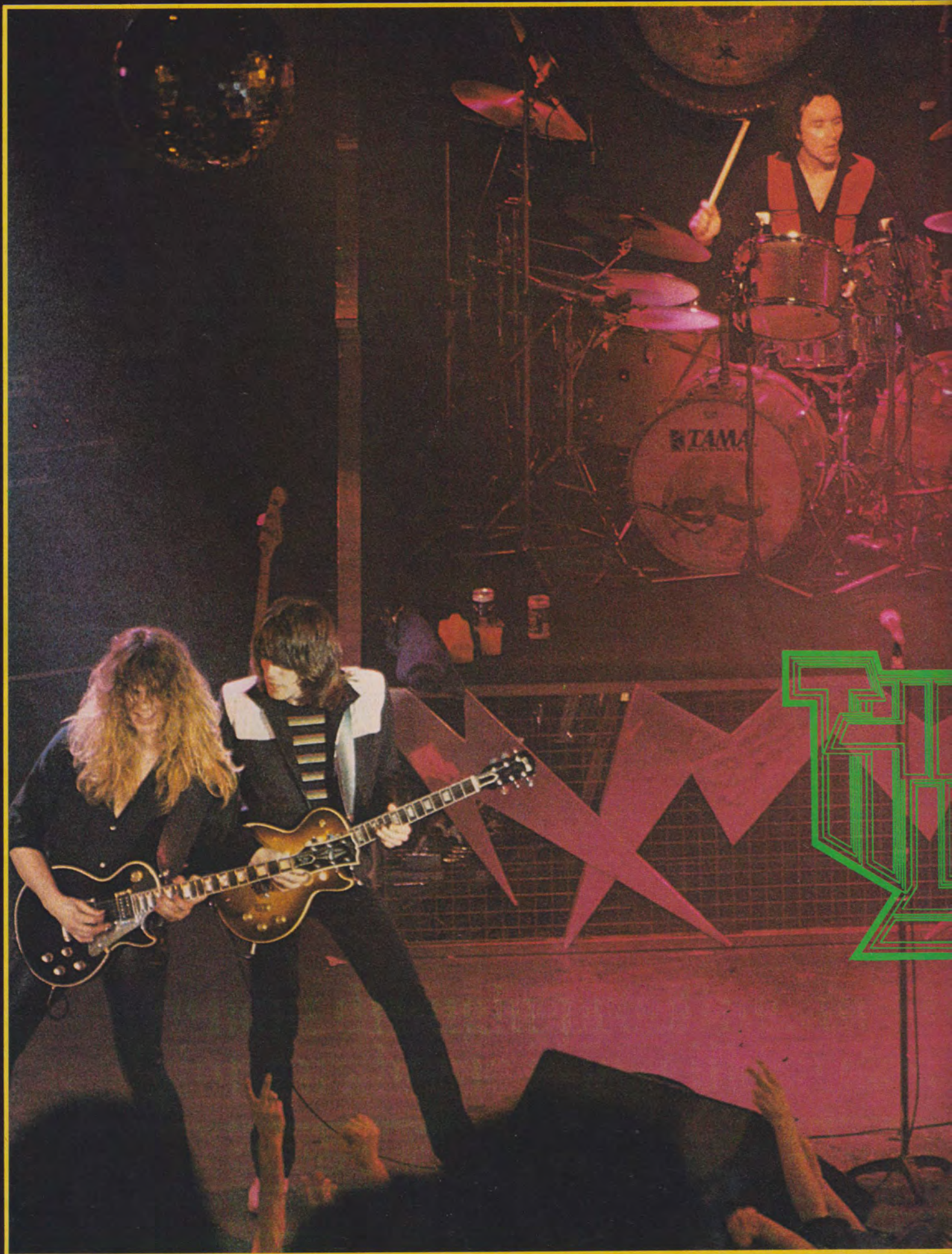
Le Mat: *Madmen?* Fools? No. *Rock'n'rollers?* Yeah, that's closer to the mark.

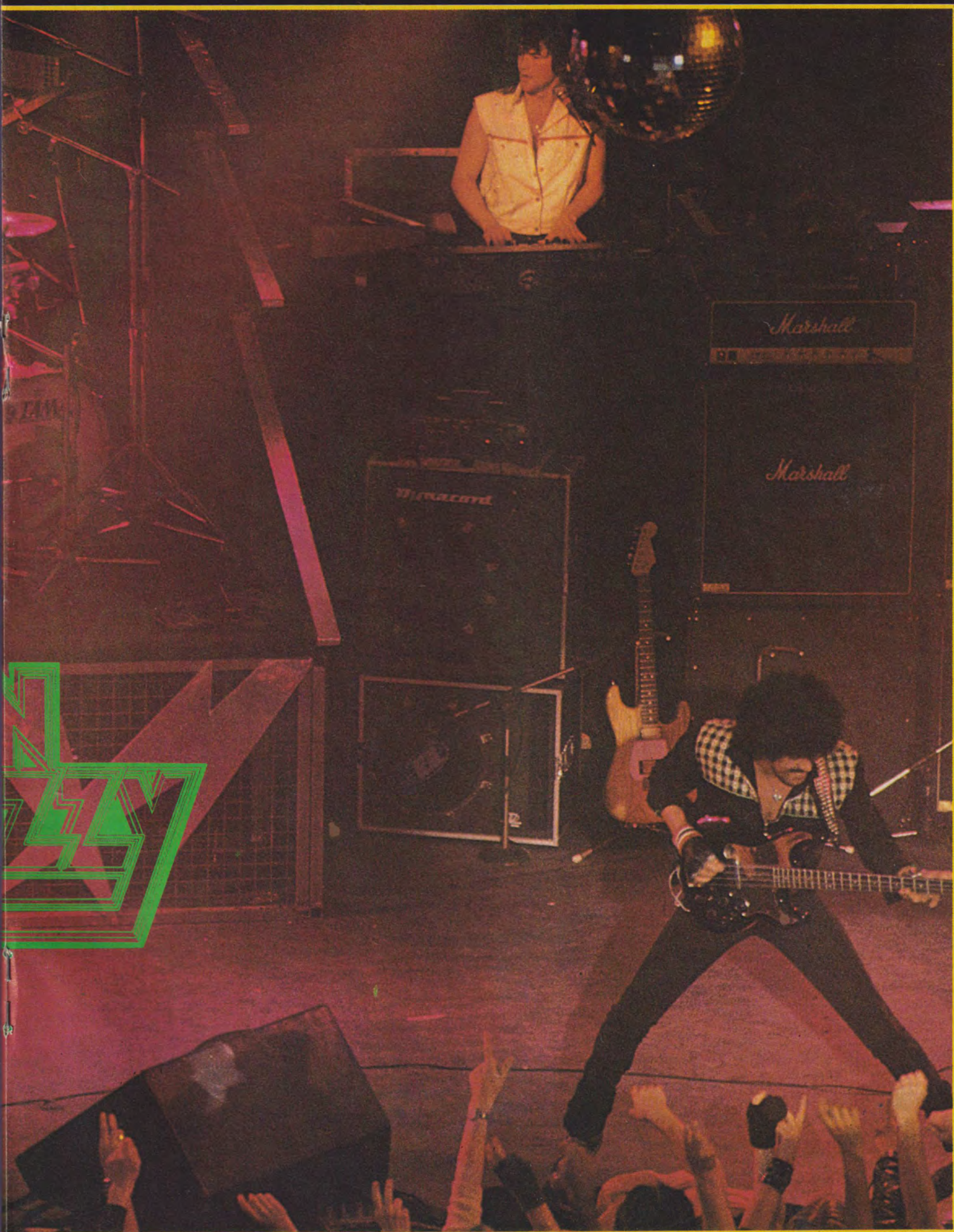


Pic Steve Callaghan

LE MAT.

LE MAT.





Pic Denis O'Regan

ANGELS IN BLACK

ROCK GODDESS are heavy heaven, gasps PETE MAKOWSKI.

"A LONG TIME ago girls were really down trodden, they were made to stay at home and cook for their brothers, fathers and all that rubbish. Now girls are getting paid the same money in jobs and they're generally more career conscious. They're being treated more like human beings and not just women. Obviously it follows that they're trying to do all the things men are doing, and they can cut it."

THIS IS THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JODY TURNER!

Now some of you folk out there in Metroland could easily misjudge it as being the ranting of some fanatical feminist. But Ms Turner is about as Womens Lib as a Manowar codpiece. In fact the lady freely admits to being quite a chauvinist in her own right. It's just that she firmly believes, along with many other musicians of either sex (and in between), colour and creed that music is a universal language that transcends the banal barriers set up by bigots.

She loves Heavy Metal with as much passion as any male I've come across and has every right to play it. Unfortunately this is still a male orientated business and as much as people try to be open minded in their attitudes to female musos, girls are still made to feel uncomfortable and out of place. Blame it on a stigma triggered off by deep rooted traditions we boys still have to shake off.

Rather than sit back and accept defeat Jody is resolute in her aims and there's a general air about her that lets you know she won't accept defeat and is determined one way or another to grab your total attention. And, although she refused to accept the role of leader, her dark lean stance, a wild head of black hair that seems to possess a Medusan life of its own and a fiery young'n'hungry persona, make her one of those people who can casually walk into a room and instantly capture everyones attention with zero effort.

That's style!

Although Rock Goddess aren't exactly conventional centre spread material but they have a femininity that is both wild and sensually alluring. A classic example to illustrate this point occurred earlier in the day when the group were interviewed by a young buck from a rival organ. After the tete a tete Jody remarked to the press office that the interviewer suffered from a terrible stammer. The fact was that the chap didn't have even the slightest signs of a speech defect

prior to his confrontation with the Goddess!

Anyway, back to the serious stuff. You can't help but feel an instant empathy almost on immediate contact with RG. They're too new and fresh for any heavy posing and they bring out your protective instincts with their totally naive trust in an interview situation. A cold hearted, unsympathetic party could make mincemeat out of these dames in print. Without the presence of manager/pater John Turner all three seem slightly bewildered.

The group, for the benefit of the uninitiated, comprise of two sisters; Jody Turner (lead vocals, all guitars), sister Julie (drums/backing vocals) and Tracy Lamb (bass). Although still outrageously young Goddess have already clocked up a few years of professional playing experience.

Originally hailing from the south side of the river, the main influence on their career has undoubtedly been Julie and Jodie's father - John, a man with a solid musical background. He was responsible for starting all three girls playing on the same day (or so legend has it) and has given the group everything they possess from general musical knowledge to their name.

A former professional musician himself, Turner has been involved in about every aspect of the business. Preconceived visions prepared me for a confrontation with some domineering father/manager pushing his brainwashed daughters into showbiz a la Zavaroni. In fact Turner turned (s'cuse pun) out to be the total opposite and his role in this fragile mechanism is a bit more subtle.

The man himself emphasises that his presence will become steadily less dominant as time passes and the band are gradually being surrounded by a team whose interests are as strong and honourable as his.

Goddess still have one major stumbling block to overcome - Julie's coming of age, when the legal system actually allows her to become a professional musician. Until then dad's presence is necessary by law along with the compulsory tutor to enable the girl to finish her schooling (ugh!)

When asked how he feels about his girls being exposed to lusty ways of rock and roll life (of which I'm sure he's experienced many episodes!) the answer comes clear and self assured: "They know how to look after themselves and at the end of the day they are my flesh and blood, I'll always be there to see them through."

My only live encounter with Goddess was an event I'm sure the band and myself would like to forget, as they were plagued with heavy duty sound problems. The gig was in Sheffield at the imposing but totally sterile surroundings of a hall which looked as if it is normally used for Philharmonic events and the audience had the enthusiasm of a limp lettuce. One could actually see a stormcloud gathering over Jody's head as the show progressed, the morose expression on her visage was a walking advertisement for manic depression.

"That was bloody awful!!!", she declared in a 'Oi! Oi!' Barbara Windsor accent, and no one could placate her mood. As you can imagine these forbidding circumstances didn't inspire the

greatest of interview situations, which is why I did a re-take at their record company office, a week later.

This time expressions of total jubilation and all round enthusiasm were beaming like rays of sunshine around the press office of A&M. Their single 'My Angel' had entered the charts at 64 and they were about to play their hometown, winding up their first ever nationwide tour with Def Leppard.

I kicked off the interview by asking them what kind of audience they felt they attracted,

Jody: "Quite a young audience, there's nine year olds walking around... really little 'uns, and yet there are people in their forties. But basically the majority are young." What kind of audience would you like to draw?

"Well the audience we've got now, we love, they're fantastic. But we'd also like to get a wider range, pull in those who are into all sorts of music."

What were your initial influences?

"It's really hard to say because we've never really been that influenced. John taught us a bit at the start, he taught us how to play standards like 'Tobacco Road' but our real influences came much later."

I recall you telling me that the Runaways had quite a devastating effect on your whole musical outlook.

"Before we saw them, we were doing rock and roll standards. When we heard them we thought they had a much heavier sound and we wanted to sound like that. We wanted to go heavier." You've said in past interviews that your lyrics are about love

Pic Fin Costello





and based around personal experiences.

"Some of it is personal, only teeny weensy bits, you know life in general."

Are you romantic?

"Yeah I am."

Could you ever foresee a heavy relationship diverting your career interests?

"No way! There'll be time for that later on, but not now. This is more important to me than anything else."

Could you see yourself writing about anything else i.e. motorbikes, sorcery, politics?

"Nah, especially not politics, I'll never write anything about politics. I think that music should be kept away from war, politics - the whole lot. Rock and roll is not about all that. Rock and roll is about fun and life"

Do you check out other lyrics?

"Yeah, I like Rush's lyrics... If I can understand them cos they're so complex y'know?"

Were you influenced by the record company to develop or change your style?

"There wasn't a massive change, they just threw in ideas really. By the time we signed we had a basic image of our own already."

What do you think of the chauvinist lyrics in HM songs?

"Well I do it the other way around, I write like about guys. Well that's what life's about. I'd rather write about that than politics or whatever."

How do you feel about the criticisms levelled at Vic Mailes production job on the album?

"I don't know why the production is being criticised, I like the album and I think Vic's production is excellent."

Tracy: "He has made us sound powerful on record."

Jody: "We like his production, but it's all down to a matter of opinion and taste."

If heavy metal went out of fashion, what sort of music could you see yourself playing?

Jody: "It won't go out of fashion, it's been the backbone of rock for a long time. It can only get bigger, hopefully it will get massive and start getting into the singles charts more. You have to be fairly commercial to crack it, but you can still be heavy."

Have you been made aware of the male dominance in the biz?

Jody: "We're not feminist. We're not into feminism at all and we don't really see much male chauvinism."

Tracy: "I haven't met any members of groups who are chauvinists. I don't think you get chauvinism amongst players, they usually treat us quite seriously. Occasionally we get someone in the audience who is just there expecting us to take our clothes off, but you don't get too much of that. It's just the odd one."

Jody: "I'd definitely like to see more venues where kids of under 18 can get in. There's a lot of really young kids into HM and they can only go to big concerts. There should be a lot more under eighteen nights and a lot of bands should participate in them."

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KLAUS MEINE and RONNIE DIO

RECOGNISE THE similarities? Indeed, these two legendary hard rock singers have often been cited as lookalikes and here we see them enjoying a backstage alcoholic bevvy together. Klaus Meine is currently rehearsing with The Scorpions as they prepare to record a follow-up to last year's marvellous 'Blackout' LP, while Ronnie Dio has just completed an album in Los Angeles.

The former Rainbow and Black Sabbath singer's record is called 'Holy Diver' and it also features bassist Jimmy Bain, guitarist Vivian Campbell and ex-Sabb skinbasher Vinnie Appice. Ronnie's elpee is due out in April and shortly afterwards he and his band (called Dio, by the way) plan to go out on the road.

Watch out for an exclusive interview with the man in our next issue...



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Venom

Pic by Fin Costello



WATCH OUT for a mass exodus from the USA in the coming weeks! Yes, folks, the unspeakable is about to occur – Venom, those well-known Black Metal malevolants, are going to follow the Queen on a short tour of America!

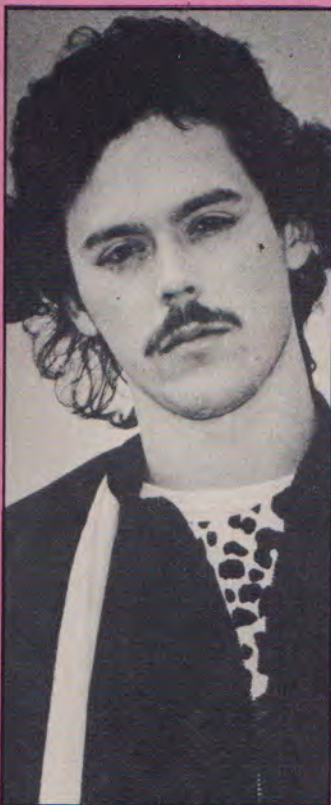
And the lads (seen here practising for a tea-on-the-lawn confrontation with the Moral Majority) are gonna be doing some fair-sized venues. Their five shows in New York and the San Francisco bay area will be attended by something like 15,000 lunatics (all, I trust, brandishing black candles and inverted crosses), a fact underlining the band's claim that they're currently the biggest selling independently-distributed heavy act in the States – ahead of even Accept!

Of course, the lads will be treating the Yanks with the respect they deserve, as Cronos confirms: "We'll take the Union Jack, ram it down their throats, out their arses and skewer them for elevenses." Bet they don't get a Hollywood-style reception organised by Nancy Reagan!

As for other live performances from Venom, none have yet been announced, although it's highly likely they'll be headlining a major festival in Holland (*Aardshock*) sometime early in the summer. MALCOLM DOME

BITCHIN' HOUR

BITCHES SIN guitarist **IAN TOOMEY** answers the critics



IAN TOOMEY Guitar

"*BITCHES SIN* are useless, garbage material. They can't play, they can't sing, they can't produce, and they sure as hell can't write a good song." (Howard Johnson - *Kerrang!* issue 20).

It's often been said that for an unknown band, a good review/feature in *Kerrang!* can be of enormous benefit. So, I suppose, the opposite is true as well. Certainly, after writing the above 'obituary' on the 'Predator' album last year, Howard 'Quiche' Johnson won't find himself heading Bitches Sin's Christmas card list. More likely, he's a hot candidate to have a painful prodder stuck up his nether orifice.

"I can't say that review did us any good, 'cos it wasn't so much a fair review as an out-and-out slagging," barnstormed Toomey on a frosty line from the band's Cumbrian base recently. "What he said was silly. There were musical passages on the album, so to say we can't play was just plain silly."

"Basically, we had lots of reviews at the time the album came out from fanzines and major magazines, and most of 'em thought it was pretty good. Indeed, we got a four star review in *Sounds* the week before

Howard's thing appeared, and the guy who did that thought our LP was better than both the *Fist* and *Raven* ones which came out at the same time! So, I think overall *Kerrang!* was out of step with the majority."

Well, were we? Certainly, the consensus of opinion amongst those who HAVE heard 'Predator' is none too complimentary, which leads me to suggest that whatever the quality of this band (of which more soon), their first album was a musical embarrassment. Indeed Toomey himself seemed almost to concede the point.

"It wasn't a good representation of what the band is all about. For me, maybe three songs on the whole thing worked out well. But, what you've got to remember is that we worked like blue-arsed flies to get it finished, doing 10 tracks in five days."

"We also had a problem cutting the album. When we heard the master tape, it sounded quite good. But none of the band were able to be present when it was finally cut, and something went wrong there. If you play the album on a good stereo system, you'll notice that the lower end has practically disappeared."

Excuses apart, it has to be said that Bitches Sin lost a tremendous amount of 'oomph' when they switched labels about a year or so back from Neat to Heavy Metal Records. Now, whilst with the Neatos, Bitches Sin did come across like a third division band with the potential at least to gain promotion to the second division, if not 'do a Watford' and go all the way! If you do but me, hunt down their single, 'Always Ready'/'Sing Of The Times', or better still check out 'Down The Road' on the Neat 'Leadweight' cassette compilation of 1981. What this trio of cuts prove is that Bitches Sin do possess more

imagination / appreciation of melody than most bands. So, what's gone wrong since the band became members of the HMR roster?

"I think the reason our recent stuff hasn't sounded so good is due to the difference between Neat and Heavy Metal Records," answered Toomey. "Paul Birch, who runs HMR, is a very good businessman and highly ambitious. He pushes bands to the limit, and certainly knows how to promote 'em. Our album got tremendous advertising back-up. In this respect he's got the edge on Neat. But, on the recording front, it's Neat who come out better. They've got their own studios, and can afford to give a band almost limitless time to get a proper sound, whereas with Heavy Metal, everything is much more 'rush, rush'. I think this comes through in the final product."

However, whether or not Bitches Sin will get a chance to utilise HM Records expertise in the area of promotion remains open to real doubt at the moment.

"The official word from them is 'the situation is very much in the air'. We are gonna be doing some new demos very soon, possibly in Neat's Impulse Studios, and the label want to hear them before committing themselves to any new deal. But, we aren't gonna bank on Heavy Metal taking up a second Album - we're also talking to other companies such as Neat and Bullet."

In the meantime, as Bitches Sin await the vinyl verdict, they'll be taking to the road for a series of March/April club and college headlining gigs.

"We aim to show the public that we aren't as bad as Howard Johnson suggested. In fact, it's on-stage that we really excell, and Bitches Sin can blow most bands off ANY TIME."

This, in fact, will the first opportunity for most punters to gain sight 'n' sounding of the new Sin line-up: Ian Toomey and his brother Pete (guitars); Frank Quegan (vocals); Bill Knowles (drums); Mike Frazer (bass). Is it perhaps significant that only the thrashin' Toomeys remain from the band that recorded 'Predator'?

"Well, I think right now, Bitches Sin has the sort of line-up we've always needed. Frank Quegan has a great voice, just like Ian Gillan, and he fits so well into the band. And I'm really glad Bill has rejoined us after a short spell away. He was also responsible for binging Mike Frazer to our attention."

"Our attitude at the moment is one of determination. We are gonna have a real go at getting through to people!"

Three years after their formation, Bitches Sin may be in a rut partially of their own making. But I don't think we've heard the last of 'em.

MALCOM DOME



FRANK QUEGAN Vocals



MIKE FRAZER Bass



PETE TOOMEY Guitar



BILL KNOWLES Drums

THE JUGGERNAUT

'Nothing can stop me now' says underground axe-hero FRANK MARINO, who tours Britain in April. Interview by LAURA CANYON.

I KNEW there had to be some reason for risking life and limb to see Frank Marino. It's the wettest night in history, the pier two blocks down the road from the Santa Monica Civic has just been washed out to sea by a 50ft wave, there's some little bloke with a grey beard leading all these animals two-by-two into a big boat, and here I am, dripping wet, waiting to get in the backstage area and being surrounded by boys!

Young guys, dozens of them, braving the storms in the hope of patting Frank Marino on the back – wouldn't want to shake him by the hand; he's just done a

jackets certainly helps; as it happens he's only in his 20s anyway). Not bad at all. So I wonder why there's no girls around the backstage area.

He ponders the question earlier in the day when we do our interview back in Hollywood. Down on the Boulevard the Mercs and Porsches are whizzing their gold-chained drivers to some snazzy office; down in the lobby a couple of hookers are starting their early shift, their pink spandex hotpants dazzling in the daylight; and in a pair of shades, on the plastic sofa in a pokey room in the tacky Hollywood

blistering three hour set back-to-back with a three hour soundcheck, and his fingers have got more holes in than a packet of Polo mints. Usually when I'm waiting to get my name checked off the list at these affairs, I'm besieged by young girls in spandex eyeing me suspiciously and trying to nick my pass. Being besieged by young guys, though, I'm not going to complain about.

The dressing room, as usual, is packed with people you'd rather not be dripping water in the company of: satin-jacketed record company execs with their false flattery and lets-all-smile-for-*Billboard* poses, radio station people, who've suddenly "discovered" Frank after 10 fine albums and are putting this concert on the air.

But the scruffy guitarist's grinning through the lot of it – hobbling around (he leapt in the air halfway through the show and landed loudly on his knee) and pouring champagne for his "guests", (he's sticking to Coke – the drinkable variety!).

A nice, regular sort of bloke for an acid casualty is Frank Marino. He's much smaller than you'd imagine from seeing him onstage, and a lot younger-looking (the removal of the moustache and hippy fringed

hotel where Motorhead made a lot of female friends and Girlschool got a lot of propositions when they stayed there, Frank is getting on with the vocal part of his job.

Okay, Frank. Will having a commercially successful single at last – the much played 'Strange Dreams' from the new album 'Juggernaut' – start bringing in some female fans?

"No, I don't think the girls will ever like me. A lot of them think my hair's too long! But I'm sure if we had the female audience we'd probably be big. I mean, who hasn't made it with the female audience?"

David Lee Roth and Nugent reckon they have in more ways than one!

"But you tell me, how do I do that? Is it having a hit, or the way you look or the way you act or something? I don't have that rockstar attitude that a lot of young girls like. I do my dancing and I do my show and I get into what I do, but I don't stuff cotton down there. What can I do?"

Get some Van Halen pink pants and a low cut shirt – the horror!

"I wouldn't want to do that! I've already shaved my moustache off so I look younger" – prompted by reviews in the English papers that called him an "aged rockstar" – "I don't know, maybe it'll happen one day."

How did Frank come to get his record on the radio without benefit of female requests? Up until now, the only Marino songs you'd hear on the American airwaves – and that was rare – were his cover songs. Hendrix, Doors, Beatles, more Hendrix...

"Now you've touched the crux. A lot of people are asking me, did you write a tune to try and get it on the air? My answer has always been: I write nothing preconceived. I don't say, this is going to be for radio so it's got to be a certain way. But one thing I did say was that I am not going to cover another tune until we've established ourselves in our own right. Because every time we would, we'd give an album with nine tracks – I don't know if you've noticed, but our albums are always 24-26 minutes a side, a lot longer than most people's records, and we always give a lot of music – and yet they would always pick the cover. That's safe. We don't like to play Frank Marino because he's too heavy or too weird or this or that, but it's safe to play a cover. Though it's Frank Marino, it's 'Roadhouse Blues' or something."

"So I said, we've got to go out on a limb here and we've got to just give our own material, and if it doesn't get on it doesn't get on. I said, guys are we ready to do that? Sure we're ready to do that! And it did get on", he chuckles.

He pulls a flap on the front of his shades so the black lenses stand to attention above his nose. He blinks out into what little daylight there is with the rain bucketing down on sunny California. Good weather to start talking about England. Frank's coming your way this April. Last

time he was over there, it inspired a whole album.

"As a matter of fact, it was your country that inspired me to write 'Juggernaut'. After we did Port Vale, I sat there, I looked at all this and said, 'you know, in America they come to these festivals for a party. In England they come for psychotherapy.' They take their music seriously. Things are so bad economically, and there's 15-year-old kids coming up to me saying, 'all right mate, you know we're going back to the unemployment line tomorrow'."

"That's a 15-year-old kid telling me this – they're so on the ball! And I started thinking really deeply about this. I said, it's like a juggernaut, it just rolls over everything. That's why I wrote 'Maybe It's Time'. 'I see my people they stand in a line, ain't got no money, can't even make a dime, and the man in his tower gets fat on power, he strips us of our pride'."

"This is why I wrote all this stuff. It's because I do believe that people are my people. I really care. And they're all being stripped, raped. And we all know it but we're all going 'hmmmm'. We're not doing shit about it man!"

Is this why Frank's last couple of albums have been more direct, less introspective hippy stuff then?

"The time came when I had to stop being introspective and start looking outwards at the things that surround me... I think that on the last album before 'Juggernaut', the only tune that really meant a lot to me was 'Ain't Dead Yet'. And that was the prelude to 'Juggernaut' – I think I knew what was coming then."

"'Strange Dreams' as the opening track of the album – I don't think people realise this – is in effect saying, 'I have these dreams', and then the rest of the album is what the strange dreams are. A concept. There are a couple of tunes in there that might be classified as filler – 'For Your Love', which is a nice tune, I don't write a lot of love songs as you may have noticed, and 'Ditch Queen', which is a put-down of certain ladies of the night, more like talking with the boys, we all talk like that – but the rest of the album really means something to me conceptually."

"I'm going to go out on a limb, I know they'll say 'he's tooting his own horn', but 'Juggernaut' is a necessary record. Not *the*, but one of the necessary records. Like Springsteen's records are very necessary, though it's kind of the other side of the coin from what I do – but he's saying something, something real, and they know it. He is real, he's not a phony, he believes in what he does and he lives his music. I take an example from that."

"This is one reason why we're working so hard, why we're doing long long shows and we're doing all the material we can. And why we're travelling in cars on purpose and trying to really get the feel of being out there, not just jetting around like we used to and having things done for us

and having people wipe our noses. We're trying to really get the feel of the people out there. It's important. The music came from the people to go back to them."

It's something Frank's been saying for ages. The power of rock, the juggernaut, is really the fans, the kids that listen to it. Without them, he reckons, he'd be out of a job and racing his custom-made cars. It's not just talk. There's few rock and rollers more patient with his fans than Frank is, hanging behind to chat and sign autographs, and you get the feeling he's really uneasy with hero worship.

"Comes a time when you have to look at yourself and say, what am I to be? A see-through type of hero, or do I want to be a hero on the merits of what I do and what I say, not for the fact that I wear tight pants or follow a certain type of trend."

And later in his dressing room after the show, he's truly upset that bouncers stopped some of the more avid headbangers standing down the front from joining him onstage.

"It's the fans really. They keep it generating. They keep going out there and listening to rock and roll and being rock and roll, and that's why it can never die, because there's such a mass of people. It sounds very 60s, power to the people, but that's honestly how I feel. Because if the kids decided to turn round and listen to country and western, it would be the power of C&W and rock and roll would be dead and I would be broke!"

One of the reasons he's going for a more straight-ahead rock sound on record is because the kids wrote and said they liked his sound better in concert. Still, there's a lot more to Frank Marino than bludgeoning Heavy Metal. He listens to a lot of classical music, instrumental movie scores and majestic symphonies and it comes out in a certain finesse in his playing. Does doing HM rock restrict him?

"Well it does if that's all you can play. But it doesn't if you can change. Our show is a long show, three hours almost, and we do a lot of different material. We do fusion, we do that mystical stuff, we do rock and roll – really heavy rock and roll too. It's like if you try to throw your eggs into one basket. I mean, I could never do a three-hour show of 'Ditch Queen' ", he laughs.

"That's too much, like *bo-ring*, turn it off man, what else can you do? I've got to show all my sides. There's a lot of things to see that some might say, 'ah, it's still dinosaur rock', but there's a lot they're going to say, 'what is *that* he's playing, it's really off-the-wall'. But that's me. I'm not going to be fake or try to be real cute or something just to get them through the door. I've got to be unique to myself."

Unique isn't the precise word a lot of critics come up with when describing Frank Marino. Of course there was that Hendrix business – when Frank started

playing guitar at 15 as a kind of therapy after coming off heavy doses of acid at an early age, Hendrix was an influence, but not the reincarnation the stories would have us believe.

"One day I woke up... I had nothing to do with that stupid shit; I've been telling people that for ten years! It follows me around everywhere. There was not an inch of truth in that Jimi Hendrix crap and car accidents and all that stuff. The only truth in it is that I did take a lot of drugs and I did go to hospitals and be all messed up and learn how to play guitar there. But there's no spiritual shit. I'm a musician, my own self. You don't just get reincarnated into some dead guy's body!"

Which has been an albatross around Marino's neck through his whole career, making it hard for some people to take him seriously. Then the critics started describing him as an Alvin Lee clone, of all people. Now just as much an over-the-hill hippy. And he's not even 30 years old!

"You see, they'll never let me go. The press hate me, especially in England. I don't know why. They hate me because of my clothing or my face or because I've got long hair or something. Jeez, they're just as guilty as people were in the '60s who didn't like people for long hair! It's crazy. I remember there was a title once: FRANK MARINO ROBS DEAD GRAVES. Can you believe that? How do you deal with that shit?"

Ignore it and get on with what you're doing?

"You can't. It hurts. Let nobody tell you they don't care. If they don't care, they don't care about themselves or their art. Would you like to pick up the newspaper and read people saying that you're a jerk and an asshole and this and that? You go to all these cities and they write about you as if they've met you and hated your guts, and you know you've never even met the person. It hurts like hell. They're just determined to dislike me."

Why? "I think it's because I don't have commercial success. So a lot of them think, what goddamn business does he even have being here? We'll fix him."

But isn't it better to be in the role of the underdog?

"The underdogs that they usually go for are usually dressed like them, talk like them, like the things they like and go 'yeah man, yeah man'. It's all very well to sit around with everyone and agree with them, and you know in this business if you agree with the right people you'll go far. I haven't always seen eye to eye with all the right people in places of power, because they know I *detest* people in power. Because the people in power have brought us to what we've come to: the brink of extinction. I *detest* any kind of power, be it in the government, the civil service or even in the media."

On a brighter note, the way Frank cheers himself up after

CONTINUES PAGE 37

KLASSIFIEDS

PERSONAL

MALE 21 bored lonely seeks friends male/female in Sheffield area. Box No. K143.

SCI/FI ROCK follower looking for fantasy female. I'm single father, one son, telepen phone, contact your choice. S.A.E. photo helpful. S.W. London. Box No. K144.

MALE INTO Rush, D/Head, Priest, T. Sister, Y&T and loads more, seeks friends M/F, (17-20) London area. All letters answered. Box No. K145.

GIRL WANTS male friends anywhere in North West area or North Wales to write or meet for gigs. Like Purple, Foreigner, Motorbikes. Box No. K146.

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GIRL 24 would like to make friends with males especially Fred Purser lookalikes into Tygers, Maiden, Priest. Photo appreciated. Box No. K147.

EDINBURGH MALE 19 seeks female for gigs. Looks not important. Photo please. Box No. K148.

ROSE, It throbs for you! (My Heart!). Simon.

PENFRIENDS

A CRAZY denim & leather male aged 18 with long hair wants female in tight jeans, leathers & denims if possible, for concerts & boozing down the dive. If you live in the Bedworth, Nuneaton or Coventry area get your arse over to me, have fun. Gary Elkington, 19 Ellesmere Road, Bedworth, Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

FOR SALE

HEAVY METAL Mania magazine featuring Scorpions, Ulrich, Maiden, Sabbath, Accept, Priest, Blackmore, Mercyful, Schenker, Raven, Motorhead, Metallica, Aerosmith and many more! In America send \$1, Europe £1.00 to Ron Quintana, 4320 20th Street, San Francisco, California, 94114, U.S.A.

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DEF LEPPARD Marquee, "row" photos S.A.E. to Box No. K116

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FAN CLUBS

SOLDIER NEW U.K. official fan club DOT, 106 Brackenbrae Avenue, Bishopbriggs Glasgow G64 2DU. S.A.E. for details.

JAGUAR F.C. and info, S.A.E. to 25 Seventh Avenue, Filton, Bristol.

BRITISH STYX Appreciation Society, £5 membership or S.A.E. for further details write to Vicky Warren, 28 Overdale, Ashted, Surrey, KT21 1PW.

SPIDER GYPSY FANWAGON (K) For free newsletters (issue 4 out now) and details send S.A.E. (A4) C/O R.C.A. Records, 1 Bedford Ave, London WC1

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ALL BLACK magic women into bats, dead cats and sticking pins into effogeés of Dio, please put your N.I.B. to paper and write to **Tony 'Iron Man' Dorsett, (age 19), Navigation Farm, Meadow Lane, Little Haywood, Staffs.**

18 YEAR old Danish female into Whitesnake and Priest, Maiden etc. is looking for HM/HR fans in London (... or somewhere else in UK), Denmark and Germany to chat about music. Photo appreciated. Please! write to: **Gitte Larsen, Sorgenfri Alle 38, DK 5250 Odense, SV, Denmark.**

WANTED, SERIOUS tape traders to exchange tapes, info etc. HM, Scorpions, Sabbath, Gillan, anything that grinds. **Laura Artz, 900 N. Magnolia Placentia, CA 92670, USA.**

17 YEAR old male earthdog into: Venom, Killer, Raven, Tank, Accept, Mercyful Fate and many others. I have a metal fanzine and tape list and I am a guitarist in a metal band. I would like to hear from anyone into earbleeding metal. All letters answered. **Cus Dennis, 984 Island Road, Victoria BC V8S 2T9, Canada.**

I'M A 16 year old Metal freak from Germany into Tygers, Whitesnake, Scorpions, Rainbow, Raven, SanTERS, Girlschool and many more. We actually get this stuff in Germany, believe me. I'd like to exchange tapes and other material. The first one to write will receive a tape with some rarities. Please write to: **Christoph Riechmann, Schneidmühlstrasse 6, 6902 Sandhausen, West Germany.**

26 YEAR old long haired male, likes Gillan, Whitesnake, Purple, CND, peace, whales, books, lazing – would love to hear from ladies 13-33 anywhere. **Keith Seddon, 2 Bucks Ave, Watford, Herts.**

GREETINGS. 19 year old Heavy Metallurgist seeks friends 17+ into Riot, Priest, Tank, Scorpions, Whitesnake. Also would like info on new heavy metal bands in Britain, USA and around the world. Females gladly welcomed. **Steve Kurysko, 43 Sanderstead Ave., Toronto, Canada M6E 4X6.**

GLASGOW HM/HR magazine seeks contacts and info on local bands for features. Possible interviews and gigs arranged. Please help us to help you. Write to: **Pam c/o The Hard Rock Cafe, The Venue, 474 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. Or visit us Fridays (pm).**

MALE HIPPIY, 18, wants to live in commune, home lodgings, anything with fellow hippies male/female nearby to share life with. Into music (good times) the mind and why? Promise reply, write me: **Colin Halliday, 7 The Drive, Newton Rigg, Penrith, Cumbria.**

TWO AUSTRALIAN girls, 17 years old, would like to hear from any male headbangers (long hair preferred) 17+. Our favourite bands are Scorpions, Iron Maiden, AC/DC, Led Zeppelin etc. Photos preferred. **Lilly and Tiny, 25 Chedgery Drive, St. Alns, Victoria, 3021, Australia.**



I AM a 16 year old female hippie on the look out fo male hippies 18+ from anywhere in the world. All letters answered. **Melinda Clifford, 7 Linden Avenue, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE3 3PG.**

18 YEAR OLD hunky Asian looking for females for gigs, pubs etc (17-20) into Led Zeppelin, Van Halen, Whitesnake, ELO and Foreigner. **Randy Raj, 55 Marine Parade, Brighton, Sussex.**

22 YEAR OLD guy wishes to correspond with any females 18+ in Scotland or North England, into most HR HM music. Write to **Barrie, 3 Deanburn Walk, Bowess, Central Scotland, EH51 0NB**

ARE THERE any other Christian headbangers out there or am I just one of a kind. Scribble your notes to a somewhat disillusioned 15 year old. All letters answered. **Ian Jaminson, Wallace House, South Street, Sherborn, Dorset.**

27 YEAR OLD British headbanger now living in Canada, into Aerosmith would like to hear from fans who have tapes, merchandise for sale or trading. Wide taste in rock music ranging from Rush to Genesis to Motorhead, Tank, Spider etc. I'm also interested in old rare US/Canuck bands. **Keith Broomfield, 1630 West 64th Avenue, Vancouver BC, Canada V6P 2P1.**

MARCO AND ALEX are our names, Italy is our country, Milan is our city, 20 is our age, motors are our hobbies, girls are our love. And logically HM, HR and good rock is our music and faith. We wait for your letters, photo appreciated. **Marco Ginex, Via Plinio 69, 20129 Milano, Italy.**

THREE FAR out male hippies/ headbangers, 17 years, into Zep, Tull, Floyd, Gong, Bad Co, & most HM hippy & blues, require female penpals 17+ years (Swedish, Dutch or German) for letters, cheap holidays etc. Contact **Simon Kerr, Matt Thear and Hugo Brooks, 20 Cromwell Road, Saffron Walden, Essex.**

I'M A Canadian headbanger (17) who wishes to visit London (or similar areas) in the summer of '83 and I also want to attend to Donnington and Reading festivals. I'm into Gillan, MSG, Maiden, Saxon, Purple etc. Would like to correspond with anyone with similar tastes. **Miguel Mendes, 8205 L' Acadie No. 2, Montreal Quebec, Canada H3N 2W3**

I'M A 19 YEAR old Metallist, into Witchkiller, Satan, Black Rose, Sacred Blade, Buzzard, and all black metal. Would like to exchange info, demos and personal views. Would like to hear about new bands. **Witchchild, Prinzenstraat 43, 5421 JJ Gement, (NB) Holand.**

HIPPY TYPE male (19), hiking around Europe in the late spring, seeks female companion. I'm taking very little with me. **Dave, 30, The lindens, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 9EG.**

17 YEAR-OLD Metal maniac from the US, is looking for males/females to correspond with. Into UFO, Thin Lizzy, Scorpions, Accept, Maiden, MSG, and most other HM/HR bands. All letters answered. **Scott Sartorius, 13924 Vista Dr, Rockville, Md 20853m USA.**

I'VE GOT millions of colour/black & white photos of Van Halen, Kiss, Who, Journey, Pat Benatar, AC/DC, Rush, Queen, Stones, BOC, Nugent from US magazines. I'd live to trade these with rockers from England, Canada, Ireland, Scotland, or anyone whose got pics of Maiden, Priest, Girlschool, Def Leppard, Sabbath, Ozzy, Motorhead, and Diamond Head. **Lisa D. Burr, 19 Byron Circle, Mill Valley, Ca 94941, USA.**

20 YEAR-OLD female headbanger from 'down under' wants British female headbangers to correspond with. Into Girlschool, Priest, MSG, Sue Edwards, 5, Fern St, Leura 2781, NSW, Australia.



ACROSS

- 1 17 down's third L.P. (2.6.2.5)
- 8 What Krokus take at any given time (3.4)
- 8 Rung in hell by 28 down (5)
- 11 Stone's fingers? (5)
- 12 What Girlschool are doing to blue murder (9)
- 14 Two letters for 5 who kicked out the jams (1.1)
- 16 What Janick Gers used to clean his paint brushes in (5.6)
- 18 Two letters for Beard's top (1.1)
- 18 Hagar's hitchhiker (5)
- 20 Young Styx person (6)
- 24 Gillan's Orleans (3)
- 25 Rudd/Lynott/Collins (4)
- 27 Triumph's machine? (4.3.4)

DOWN

- 1 It's in Lemmy's glove (4.4)
- 2 Queen's heart attack? (5)

- 3 ... and their cultural evening out (1.5.2.3.5)
- 4 They put Disraeli into gear (5)
- 5 This Terry's drummed with 17 downs (5)
- 6 Rush on splitting up? (12)
- 7 This 'Rider' was a biker cult movie (4)
- 10 The L in ELP (4)
- 13 This Steve has axed with Lynnyrd (6)
- 16 Skinsman with the second Jeff Beck Group (4.6)
- 17 Masters of the Universe? (6)
- 21 Shock tacticians (6)
- 22 Descriptive of White (5)
- 23 This Mitchell was Hendrix's drummer (5)
- 26 McCafferty from Nazareth (3)
- 28 Continental current for Angus and co (1.1)

DOWN: 1. Iron Fist 2. Sheer 3. A Night At The Opera 4. Cream 5. Ollis 6. Subdivisions 7. Easy 10. Lake 13. Gaines 15. Cozy Powell 17. Hawkwind 21. Samson 22. Snowy 23. Mitch 26. Dan 28. D.C.

ACROSS: 1. In Search Of Space 8. One Vice 9. Bells 11. Sticky 12. Screaming And Roll 14. MC 16. White Spirit 18. ZZ 19. Sweet 20. Dennis 24. New 25. Phil 27. Rock

DEF LEPPARD, Odeon Hammersmith

A WILD and ferocious Def Leppard leapt at the throats of its audience and claimed another killing on the first major Lep safari in many moons. It happened at the Odeon Hammersmith and by all accounts, and travellers tales, at many other stopping off points on the Leppard's rampage around the country.

Graced by the presence of Phil Collen now on guitar with Steve Clark, the band are brimming with confidence, grit and power. And a packed Odeon crowd leapt to its feet and stayed there for the whole of the band's non-stop assault on the senses. Whoever said Leppard were over the hill was reckoning without the loyalty of an army of fans. They stretched out their arms in supplication, lit cigarette lighters in the time honoured fashion and shook their heads with sufficient violence to cause teeth, eyeballs etc to break free from their moorings.

'Rock Til You Drop' was the battle cry of the prettiest stars of Metal. Although the boys look younger and flashier than ever, they seem like seasoned pros with their stage craft, use of lighting and effects and command of the crowd. Joe Elliott, all padlocks, studs and black leather thrusts himself aggressively at the audience and sang with a voice blackened by the smoke of Sheffield. There seemed no danger of Joe dropping, despite the consistently high level of attack.

He ripped off his jacket to reveal a Union Jack waistcoat and waved a mike stand with a threatening gesture that seemed to signal he intends to export Leppard's success all around the world. After the changes and long silence from the band last year, and their less than successful spot at the Reading Festival a while back, it seems that the band have revived their fortunes and image – at a stroke.

Psyched up for hard touring they have lost some of their earlier innocence. Gone are the vocal harmonies and clipped beats of yesteryear. In their place – a much harder vocal and instrumental sound.

The disciplines of studio playing means that Rick Allen tends to play in a very disciplined style, with no room for surprises or deviation. His precision is absolute and he only allows himself a few carefully planned drum breaks, like a thunder of tom tom triplets at the end of a song. I would like to hear him loosen up and ad lib but that would probably upset the fine tuning of Leppard's motors.

While Rick remained hidden behind his kit, the rest made full use of the stage, as Phil in his spotty shirt pursued Rick Savage and Steve in a guitarists' waltz. Toes turned inwards, skinny legs akimbo, they danced a strange dance that would be of keen interest to anthropologists. 'Here vee see zee young peacock males dancing before the rest of the tribe, armed with the loud speakers – the very loud speakers – to assert their authority and command.'

Joe took this a stage further by leaping up onto the lighting gantry to turn a spotlight into our faces, while clouds of smoke periodically enveloped the group to eerie effect.



Joe Elliott: rule Britannia

Joe roared his way through 'Photograph' from the 'Pyromania' album paving the way from some fast solo work from Phil. 'London – are you with us? We want to hear you make some NOISE!' bellowed Joe determined to keep the crowd on their toes. On 'Lady Strange' there was some useful unison guitar, but I missed hearing any really cutting guitar solos. The band tended to roar through the PA and it was difficult to detect any single note stuff.

Even when Phil was featured in his own spot he chose power chords and lots of reverb, and when Rick Allen backed up Joe in a drums/vocals duet, his snare drum tended to sound like a box of gravel. But I suppose it's no use demanding subtlety when Leppard are in full cry. The aim is maximum excitement and volume epitomised by 'Rock Of Ages', which featured Joe and Rick's chanting session with the audience.

The pace slowed for 'Bringing On The Heartbreak' followed by 'Let It Roll' when Joe formally introduced the new boy on guitar. 'He used to be a Girl, but he got better!' From then on the show whirled towards a climax of yelling fans, and blazing guitar and drum fury. There weren't very many memorable tunes, but one of the more musically satisfying moments came when they played an old time rocker to recall 'the old days at The Marquee'. You could say that Def Leppard need to control their volume and come up with some more in-depth material, but as one fan told me 'They're up there – doing it'. And that's what counts in the jungles of rock.

Rock Goddess opened the show and according to my same informant

'They were terrific – brilliant!' Sorry girls, I was stuck behind a huge articulated lorry in Earls Court at the time, cursing London's traffic. For this I accept any punishment you care to administer.

CHRIS WELCH

TWISTED SISTER Marquee, London

YOU PAYS your money, and you bangs your head. Now, whatever your views on the on-going Twisted Sister/Manowar heavyweight battles (personally, I believe that if there ain't enough room on the planet for both these fine combos, then some of the plethora of naff outfits cluttering up the streets are gonna have to be forcibly ejected to MAKE room), it has to be said, the Sisters of Merciless fate currently have the drop on the 'Black Wind' legion, at least in the UK. For a kick-off, they've a major deal now with Atlantic, and secondly, Snider's snarling snagglepussies have already proven themselves on stage. Far be it for me to doubt Manowar's recent claims to be everything they say they are (I'm sure the band are), but... well, no-one in the UK has yet had a chance to evaluate 'em, right?

But to get to the point. Twisted Sister, at the second of two sold-out Marquee shows, were... TUMULTUOUS. The Marquee over its 25 years has had some mighty bands treading the boards, and whilst I'm not suggesting Sister are in the Who/Stones class YET, nonetheless they sure as damn it wrote another glorious chapter into the club's thick annals.

There's not, I'll wager, a faster, meaner, louder, harder bunch of mule-yanking, rhythm-whippin' SMFs (and if you don't know what that stands for, then you ain't likely to get 'into' this mob's Twisted tank-roll style of rockin' the eyeballs clean outta their sockets) around than the New York quintet, 'cos they don't just kick ass, they positively pulverize it.

And, let's get something straight right now. If Twisted Sister are glam, then Hilda Ogden is Bo Derek in curlers. No, they use make-up as war paint (or should that read WOARGH paint?) rather than for pouting. Moreover their absolutely GI-NORMOUS stage personas made Hanoi Rocks by comparison seem like posin' pansies. The amount of energy they expended during the 80 minutes set was awesome. Gravel-throated vocalist/human flashbomb Dee 'The Only Man Likely To Have Oral Sex With Nancy Reagan' Snider was in particular the nearest I've seen in recent times to a rock 'n' roll perpetual motion machine. And his never-ending gonzo blur of between-song raps rammed home like a seismic shock wave, making even Ted Nugent seem like a man in need of speech therapy by comparison.

So, OK, musically, the band dropped notes the way some football clubs sack managers. But, show me a rock band who are not perfect live, and I'll show you a rock band that ain't a rock band! Spontaneity and atmosphere are what it's all about, stage-wise. In this respect.

If you've got even a shred of rock 'n' roll spirit left, then you'll need no urging to get down the front when TS next hit your town (their latest national tour begins on April 6 in Portsmouth). If not... Soft Cell await ye!

MALCOLM DOME

WISHBONE ASH Marquee

WISHBONE ASH seem to pull an odd crowd these days – a third hippies, a third headbangers and another third (ahem) straights and business-types. And it seemed that support band Shiva were going to become victims of the mish-mash of musical tastes present.

But the Bristolian three-piece didn't despair, and by the end of their set they had the crows eating out of their hands.

And so onto Wishbone Ash.

The first thing that struck me was the heaviness of the numbers they were playing. 'Can't Fight Love' and 'Living Proof' were superb songs to open with; bags of power and melody, both featuring the kind of guitarwork that would make many axe-heroes blush with shame. As usual, the guitar sound was crystal clear – full marks to the sound engineer.

Songs new and old were aired in their hundred minute set, including the timeless 'Phoenix'. This originally appeared on their debut L.P., but it remains as fresh and vital as the day it was recorded.

The newer numbers from 'Twin Barrels Burning' stood tall alongside 'Jailbait' et al. They even had the guts to keep going when the backline cut out during 'Blowin' Free' –

inviting idiot dancers onto the stage while the problem was sorted out. "Bad Weather Blues" closed the proceedings leaving me pondering over the million dollar question – why are this band so underrated? **DAVID LING**

SACRED ALIEN Salford Tech.

YOU'VE read the article now welcome the band. Sacred Alien feel their time is coming. Never ones to sit around and wait for music biz interest they create their own with an O.T.T. show which uses more inventive visuals than ever before. As has been stated elsewhere you don't pigeonhole this band, you just go along and enjoy. However when I was told by their manager that they had gone "Glam" I did have a few palpitations/reservations, but there is no wimpy sellout here just solid, furious rock.

The show opens with a number called 'Attack', the words "Are YOU ready" may sound familiar but it's amazing how they grab the ears. Next up was the psychedelic oldie 'Spiritual Planet' with Sean Canning jumping around like there's ants in his pants (skin-tight leotard). Martin Ainscow now with an oil slick of mascara for a face, explodes into a vapourising lead and just when you've coped with the speed, he stutters and turns the riff on its head.

Reservations are minimal but perhaps a slow tune wouldn't go amiss as it would do justice to their individual talents and give their audience a breather. This lot always had the stamp of quality across their now mascara bound cheeks, if they could overcome media myopia they have great potential.

PAUL MAHER

WRATHCHILD: Kensington Ad Lib, London

WHEN DOES Glam-orous become ridiculous? An interesting point for conjecture and one which has a good deal of relevance to the most recent Wrathchild battle plans. Currently embarked on the 'Sit On My Face' tour, there has been no relenting on the part of Rocky Shades, Lance Rocket, Eddie Starr and Marc Angel in their quest to become the rudest, grossest Glam Rock purveyors on our fair isle – a thoroughly laudable aim you will agree!

Their latest hair-brained scheme of including certain quantities of edible knickers (strawberry flavour) in their four track, 12" debut E.P. which the band promise to eat off the person of anyone who turns up to a Wrathchild gig wearing them is a courageous blow for Wrathdom and a trick not to be trifled with when we consider the monstrosities who could arrive sporting the wretched things!

Don't get the criticisms out of proportion – Wrathchild have a lot to offer with their bubblegum brand of Rock, but by cleaning up on one or two points they will be doing themselves plenty of favours. Point number one is 'boots'. Yes, 'boots'! Rather large ones to be precise and dangling from the feet of Mr. Shades. Making Paul Stanley's starchy foot clobber look like a pair of 'Start Rites', Rocky put so much into building his veritable stack heels that when he actually got to perform in them, he couldn't move! It was comical and ridiculous indeed to view the frontman attempting to command the stage by jumping up and down on the spot like some undernourished gorilla.

"Comical" pops up in criticism number two, or rather the lack of a comical element in Wrathchild's performance. Smiles were few and far between during songs such as 'Cock Rock Shock' and 'Teenage Revolution' and Rocky's intros were corny rather

than convincing. Glam Rock demands an element of self-parody and while Wrathchild have a generally sound image (boots aside) and some instant songs, they need to present themselves rather more as a tongue-in-cheek tease. They have plenty of time to develop, so stay tuned!

HOWARD JOHNSON

ERIC BURDON The Canteen, London

ERIC BURDON, 'The Voice' from Newcastle, deserves his place in the rock hall of fame. He was the first really powerful British rock singer, roaring, passionate and drenched in the blues. You can trace the line of development from Eric all the way down to the Metal throats of today.

Perhaps that's why there was such a bizarre mixture of people who turned out to see Burdon and his tight, wiry little band at London's Canteen during their week long residency. There were spikey punks with pink hair behind me, and a Lord Lucan look-alike and his uppercrust pals drinking champagne in front. There were leather jacketed, bombed-out Geordies shouting the odds and falling over, and a whole bunch of 'Sixties' faces out to relive past glories. Eric himself was oblivious. Even while some of his fractious fans exchanged punches and broke glasses only inches from his face he carried on singing.

Although Eric's hair has turned a whiter shade of pale, there is no sign of decay in the voice that helped launch The Animals to stardom back in '65. He had a great backing band – Zoot Money on piano, Terry Stannard smacking home the off-beats on drums, Nigel Smith on bass, G.T. Moore on guitars and Mel Collins on a variety of saxophones.

At a low volume level they managed to develop amazing power and real excitement. 'We're doing it all for Eric' Zoot Money told me heading towards the stage earlier. 'Let's face it, in times of mass unemployment who's gonna turn down a week's work.'

Eric built the tension carefully, starting with a slow blues then launching into a reggae version of 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood' one of his classic hits with The Animals. In his sleeveless jacket covered in badges he looked like a revolutionary truck driver. But occasionally a smile creased his face as the crowd yelled their appreciation for 'If Ma Could See Me Now', and 'Bring It On Home To Me.'

Unfortunately you could only see Mel Collins from the waist down as he stood behind a huge PA speaker, but his saxophone made its presence felt with a string of superb solos that urged Eric on to fresh vocal feats. 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place' with a disco treatment, 'It's My Life And I'll Do What I Want,' and the classic 'No More Elmore James' produced an atmosphere bordering on delirium among the seething mass sitting on the floor, in gangways and on each other's laps as everyone struggled to see the return of one rock legend who didn't let us down.

We could by now forgive a rather ragged 'River Deep Mountain High', and the fact he refused to sing 'House Of The Rising Sun' (why be an unpaid promoter for the record company?). He donned a pair of weird looking dark glasses and launched into an astonishingly powerful riff that was pure San Francisco freak-out circa 1967. 'Fill your brain with cocaine!' he bawled as Lord Lucan sipped his champagne, the punks ruffled their spikes and Geordies engaged in fresh battles with the bouncer. Somehow, Eric, the prototype wild man of rock, has that effect on people.

CHRIS WELCH

MARILLION Kent University, Canterbury

A FIGURE moves, the click of heel against tarmac cracking the still and awful evening. He shivers, involuntarily, and pulls his coat collar up around his cheeks, small comfort against the rain-sheathed air. Around him leer unfamiliar, oppressive organs of learning, of concrete and glass, abstract half-towers reflecting the pale shimmer of cadmium lighting. The chill dankness stings his lips and he quickens his stride, attempting some measure of purpose, some pretence at confidence. A tear forming at the corner of his eye might betray the moment, could anyone see as he enters the darkened enclosure: The Jester assumes his place amongst the throng, his script is about to be unfolded...

We have converged here to witness the second of Marillion's pre-tour warm-ups, a select few (the gig unadvertised outside of the University campus) to watch perhaps one of the very last times this band will play a college gig. The night is indeed chill and unwelcoming, and if the gig is perhaps less than wholly satisfactory the mistakes will be ironed out; that, after all, is the point of doing warm-ups.

He stands divided; both within the walls of this building, an intruder, observing and observed; and yet on a plateau in sound texture, delicate, uplifting passages of keyboard interwoven with threads of warm, enticing guitar that shield, envelop, cocoon. And, like a moth to a candle, his gaze becomes fixed to the eye of the gathering storm, and things begin to lose their focus...

Marillion's sound, though hardly harnessed to its greatest effect here, is constructed in layers around Mark Kelly's keyboards; in essence he is the Marillion sound. The mix fails to do them or their songs adequate justice, Mick Pointer's drums at times losing their drive and direction when they emerged from the speakers. Fish, too, glaring from black painted eyes, has a running battle with his mike-stand but turns the fault to his advantage as a continuing joke. The between songs raps often work, occasionally don't; sometimes they seem superfluous or over-extended, at others quite endearing.

Steve Rothery, while striking an unlikely figure as a guitar hero, dances nimbly enough over the frets, particularly on 'Script...' and 'The Web'. Over six songs Marillion flex their stiffened musical joints after their sojourn in the studio; it's not perfect but even a below-par Marillion would put many bands to shame. And then –

Reality encroaches. He stands on a shambolic, littered street corner in Belfast, somehow transported, and a cold slice of fear runs through him like pain, like a Forgotten Son: "HALT!!" cries an imposing voice, "WHO GOES THERE!?" And the fear becomes liquid, a bead of sweat on the palm of his hand. "Deathhhh...", an answer hissed, snaking the few yards from speaker to stark ear. "Approach..." and the silence is brittle and intense, frightening; he bites his lip, not daring even to breathe. "... Friend." And the spell is broken to crescendo...

I shan't dwell on the limitations of their art, their inexperience in its presentation on a large stage that they have still to master. This show is stunning, moving, captivating – SEE IT.

His mind, egg-shell fragile, splintered, he can only turn to leave...

DAVE DICKSON

MARINO

from page 33

reading his reviews is turning to his fan mail. Though his peers haven't given him the credit as a guitarist he deserves after 10 years of perfecting his craft (only Brian May of Queen, and Hendrix impersonator Randy Hansen have shown his playing any respect in the past) he gets "thousands of letters" from young kids saying they've been influenced by him.

"That's what I do when I want to feel better. I read my fan mail! I've always wanted respect from other musicians. You know the Van Halens and all those people, they won't admit that I did these things years ago and they knew it. They won't ever give me credit."

Frank even builds, or at least rebuilds with help from a technician friend, all his own guitars and amps, the famous Gibson SG Les Paul with the dents and holes being his trademark. "I build my equipment the way I like it, and I can make a lot of sounds that guys can't make with synthesizers."

Talking of which, there's synthesizers on the new album, and a keyboards player has been added to the band. That makes it five now. And to think it started out as the Mahogany Rush power trio...

"It's going to keep growing. One day it's going to be nine, that's my dream. Nine guys. I know exactly who they've got to



be, what they've got to play and the kind of music we're going to do. I've got stuff on tape that no-one's ever heard that I've done in the studio. I've played a lot of instruments myself, it's really heavy. Not heavy like kerrannnnngggg, but mentally heavy. It's not jazz or anything, don't get me wrong, it's like heavenly music. But I don't think people are ready to hear that yet.

"It makes 'World Anthems' look like kindergarten. It's very technical but it's put together in an easy to listen to way. It's almost movie score – majestic. I started playing with it on 'The Emperor' and 'Moonwalk' and stuff like that. Really off the wall but accessible. But it's not time yet..."

Talking of time, how's the racing going?

"We've won a few – haven't won any large amounts of money or trophies, but we're doing fine."

Sounds like the same could be said for his music. He grins in reply.

KERRANG!

Say it loud to Kommunikation, Kerrang!, 40 Long Acre, London WC2

RIGHT YOU lot!!! I buy every issue of *Kerrang!* in the hope of finding some pictures or snippets of information about drummers. Mostly, though, I am confronted with pix of axemen, their teeth and guitars. I know that there are loads of axemen about, but there are also a lot of skinbeaters, and we're getting a bit pissed off with it all.

Instead of frantically searching for blokes to shove in the 'Guitar Hero' slot, how about doing a series of *Kit Hero* pages. Feature people like Neil Peart, Clive Burr, Carl Palmer, Eric Carr (Kiss), Vinnie Appice and Cozy Powell; tell us about their equipment, influences, heroes, etc., as opposed to coming up with almost totally unknown guitarists. Get something done, soon! *Stixx*

WHAT'S THE matter with you guys? Haven't you ever heard of Angel City? I mean, I pick up your rag all the time and have yet to see an article on this great band. Mind you I know they are a little different from your average boring Heavy Metal band. At least they have some originality. And also some damn good songs, like 'City Out Of Control', 'Devil's Gate', 'Storm The Bastille', 'Take A Long Line', etc.

I appreciate your other articles as I am heavily into Metal music, especially Motorhead, Saxon, Priest, Riot, Marino etc., but I do have some complaints.

- 1.) What's this Lords Of The New Church bullshit? I thought yours was a Heavy Metal rag, not concerned with new wave crap.
- 2.) Forget the Bob Seger krap as he's about as heavy as a feather.
- 3.) Forget all that krap on Los Angeles bands as most of them suck. I know I live in that city.

Here's a concert review for all Frank Marino fans. His band played the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium on January 28, 1983. There was no opening band and Marino & Company played for two and a half hours - they blew the roof off the place. To all Marino fans everywhere, you missed his best show ever. My ears were still ringing three days later. Keep on partying, **Greg 'Nasty' Naster, Arleta, California.**

AS A regular reader of your mag I feel I must write to complain about the lack of coverage given Britain's greatest rock band, Grand Prix.

All us G.P. fans are getting a bit pissed off when we have to fork out 60 pence for a *Kerrang!* only to find there's nothing about our fave band inside, except when their name is printed top of the local charts, as in issue no. 34.

So forget all the bullshit you've been printing on no-hopers like Accept and Twisted Sister in recent weeks and get your cameras and note pads down to the Grand Prix camp and interview a real rock band who are sure to become the greatest group of all time, when they get their next record deal. **Albert the Oxen, Scotland.**

THIS LETTER is from two card-carrying 'Sick Mother'**** Friends of Twisted Sister. Jeff and I are a couple of seriously unconventional Political Science rivet-head interns at the state capitol here in Denver. I can't get back to New York as often as I'd like and would appreciate reading something about Twisted's new album



HILDA OGDEN'S thermo-nuclear rollers shift into overdrive as Black Sabbath run through 'Paranoid' on the screen (are you sure about this?-Ed)

AS A dedicated member of the DDIDC ('Don't Do It Deirdrie Campaign'), I propose that *Kerrang!* begins its own fortnightly version of *Coronation St.* Of course, the cast would have to change slightly - how about this for a star line up. *Kerrangation Street:*

Ken - Michael Schenker (nearest hair cut)
Deirdrie - Lyndsay Hammond
Mike Baldwin - David Coverdale (he says he's got what it takes)
Tracy - Angus Young (only available school-kid)

Uncle Albert - John McCoy (grumpy old git)
Stan - Nicky Moore (with a belly like that who else?)
Hilda - Dee Snider (for obvious reasons)
Eddie - Ozzy (same fat belly and ugly face)
Bett - Kelly Johnson (God's gift to boozers)
Fred - Meat Loaf (horrendous oaf)

Well how about it *Kerrang!* After all *Coronation St.* was voted 6th in your readers poll. **From a Blackfoot, Yorkshire.**

Jeff and I would like to tell you how much we appreciate the mag. The HM input you provide us with is something we otherwise wouldn't receive here in the land of REO Schlockwagon and Pat (makes me puke) Benatar. Denver's radio stations suck. Between *Kerrang!* and our own album selection insanity is alive in Colorado.

A note to Nikki Sixx. In your recent interview with *Kerrang!* you didn't seem too impressed after your first exposure to the Bad Boys (Twisted). You and the Crüe are hard-rockin' guys and I know if you checked out Twisted in depth you'd be impressed. You and Dee have a lot in common (i.e. your noses).

To Twisted, their crew, the front row girls, all the SMFS in N.Y. and maniacs everywhere - turn it up and tear it loose. Rockin' our asses off in Denver. **Jim Marvin, Jeff Gawron.**

ACE, MAGIC, Fierce, Amazing, Excellent, Wonderful, Fantastic!! You may well wonder what I'm raving on about; well, this is what I thought of

the Def Leppard concert at the Apollo, Manchester. If this tour isn't successful I'll eat my *Honda*. So come on all you rockers, give the lads a break and shoot them to the top! They deserve it. And if Rick Allen wants his drumstick back he can come and get it. **Sue Berry, Greater Manchester.**

THANK YOU, a million times for the feature on ELP. It is long overdue and, as Chris Welch pointed out, no-one else writes about them now, and even in their heyday only two DJ's would dare play their music.

I was 14 when I first saw ELP in '72 at the Oval when the support bands were none other than Wishbone Ash, Genesis, Focus, Jack Bruce Band and Argent. That day also, Deep Purple were just down the road at the Brixton, Sundown. Times have changed, however, and now the 14 year olds listen to Fun Boy Three and other such masters of the sacred vinyl. It's really sad and it's up to the likes of you to educate the masses. Asia are a fine band, but they're bullshit

compared to ELP or Yes. Most of the other 'pretenders' don't even seem worthy of comparison.

Kerrang! is a great mag. It fills a vital gap in current popular music media. I'm sick of all the rubbish in the other music papers and the drivel that makes the charts. It's this disillusionment amongst the lost generation that started Progressive Rock in 1970 - the post Woodstock era that fought back with sheer musical aggression and not posey fashion or trends. It will happen again and then in five years the new bands will shun Marillion and Def Leppard for the millions they will have made. Long live the revolution. **Martin, head of the brain salad surgeons. Sidcup, Kent.**

I WANT to profusely thank Pete Makowski for the great Sabbath piece he did in issue no. 35. As a hardcore HM and Sabbath fan I can say that it was one of the best in recent memory. I would also like to say that I feel Sabbath is no. 1 and always has been; with or without Ozzy they are definitely the world's greatest rock 'n' roll band. Also if there's any way that you can get in touch with Tony Iommi, please tell him that all us real Sabbath fans out here don't give a shit what Ozzy says... Sabbath Rules, Ozzy Drools. **Mike Sieminski, Brockton, MA.**

AAAAAAAAAARRGH! I don't believe it! Merciful Fate actually being featured in the hallowed pages of a *Kerrang!* (issue 34)! Cheers to Malcolm Dome for a superb (albeit short) exposé of the Danish Metal Gods!

It's true their satanic imagery may be a bit overdone, but this takes absolutely nothing away from the band's talent! Anyone who listens to such Fate anthems as 'Into The Coven', 'Burning The Cross' and 'Doomed By The Living Dead' and doesn't recognise the virtuoso guitar abilities of Hank Sherman and the solid talents of the other members, as well as the group's use of some unique song structures and chord progressions, should be nailed up and crucified as a poser! Also, whoever labels Fate just another 'evil' band and takes their imagery seriously doesn't recognise pure escapism as its most extreme! In short, Merciful Fate are the ultimate in over-the-top Power Metal!

So to Merciful Fate, keep up the brilliant work and remember that your Coven is behind you 101 per cent! One last thing: the Sabbath and Jaguar articles in issue 34 were excellent also, and as long as you continue to feature the likes of Accept, Merciful Fate, Venom, Raven and Metallica (hint, hint) I'll ignore the Journey and likewise dribble and I'm positive bangers over here in the States will have more respect for your mag, because as you must know by now, Journey, Foreigner and the hundreds of other AOR groups are considered dog vomit by most of us American headbangers (in much the same way you in England despise Bucks Fizz!) Just because a band is popular in the U.K. (or visa versa) doesn't mean it's well liked over here (Motley Crue suck!), got it? **B. Lew, Sunnyvale, California, U.S.A.**

Pic Ross Halfin

BACK IN THE FIGHT

MARSEILLE return to do their duty. MALCOLM DOME salutes them.



Pic Fin Costello

MARSEILLE: (left to right) Neil Buchanan, Mark Hays, Sav Pearce, Keith Knowles, Steve Dunwoodie.

IT MAY not have been mentioned on *'The Sky At Night'*, but a few years ago Britain was very nearly swallowed up by a renegade black hole. Eventually, the only way this catastrophe could be averted was through the offering of several young heavy bands of the late seventies as 'sacrificial lambs' for the slaughter. Thus, Liar, Lone Star and Marseille (each caught up in the whirlpool of punk fashionability) all disappeared into the abyss. For the first two combos, this was definitely a permanent situation, but Marseille have fought back hard, ready to rise once more from the jaws of the dragon!

As lead guitarist Neil Buchanan explains: "We came on the scene when it wasn't hip to be a new, young band into Heavy Metal, and consequently we suffered. Probably we arrived a year too early, but there's still a buzz for us from hard-core fans. So, we feel it's our duty to have another crack."

The roots of Marseille's resurgence actually lie in their original demise. Back in 1979, everything seemed hunky-dory. Their eponymous debut LP (remember 'Do It The French Way', 'Lady Of The Night' and 'Some Like It Hot?') on Mountain Records proved a rather good *entree* of meaty melody, and tours with UFO/Whitesnake/Judas Priest/Gillan underlined their potential...

"After we'd done that 25-date tour with Whitesnake in 1980, promoters were talking seriously

about putting us on as a headlining act in our own right," reveals Buchanan. "We then went to the States for about three months, working with Blackfoot and Nazareth, and were literally on the point of breaking, things were so hot. But then Mountain (who also managed the band) went into liquidation – and it was *ultra*-liquidation! We flew back home to have a holiday and watch *'Coronation St'* before starting on our second LP with Roger Glover producing (Japan collaborator John Punter had done the aforementioned first one), but we left all our equipment in the States – and because the company went bust we couldn't get it back!"

18 months of scraping and saving followed before the band got their property back. But by that time Marseille it seemed had fallen apart, with all five members going their separate ways.

"One week-end, though, Steve (Dinwoodie-bass), Keith (Knowles-drums) and myself got together and agreed that the bands we were with at the time weren't as good as Marseille. So we decided to reform."

That was early in '82. Soon after, the hard-core trio picked up local guitarist Mark Hay, and put the finishing touch to the new-look jigsaw by snatching gruff-voiced 'Sav' Pearce from Liverpool band Savage Lucy. Pearce is gonna be a phenomenon. A Scouse equivalent of Riot's Rhett Forrester, he was doubtless weaned on a diet of molten vinyl and 'Smoke On The Water' at an age when most babies are fed fresh milk and *Farley's* Rusks.

"There's nothing better than getting 'high' on rock music. And

when I'm 'on', audiences are just gonna cower in fright," he boasts with scarcely concealed glee.

"When I pull on my white boots, I feel I just *have* to get on-stage and sing my heart out. I'm so into rock 'n' roll that I'd have an instant orgasm if someone fitted an echo unit to those boots. One day I'm gonna take my eyes out and replace 'em with massive head-lights. Then, I'll walk around with two *Duracell* batteries under my arms, beaming 'em straight into people's faces!"

Is it any wonder Buchanan proclaims: "we're proud to have 'Sav' as our front-man. He represents the spirit of Marseille."

Watching the band rehearse the other day just served to underwrite their re-born talent. They preened, posed, and paced out through 50 minutes of scintillatingly hard music. You'd have thought there were 20,000 screaming, lurching Miami fans gradually going nova out front rather than an audience of two – myself and manager Derek Nicol. It was an electrifying, devouring amalgam of sleaze-tease with new songs like 'C.C. Riders', 'Heat Of The Night', not to mention a storming version of 'Radar Love' (covering Golden Earring's original in cobwebs), proving Marseille aren't coming back with a band, but a veritable nuclear detonation!

"We're now at a stage when we need to feel an audience," states Buchanan, a fact I'll not argue with. "I think, we grew up quickly through touring with a band like Blackfoot, and it'll show when we hit the road again. Blackfoot are just incredible, you can't fail to learn from them. For instance, Rick Medlocke is one of the

craziest guys I've ever seen on a stage and yet he's only got one lung. Night after night, we'd watch in the wings as he'd go through an incredible routine, then come off after the set, go on a lung machine for a short time, then go out and do it all over again during the encore. We reckoned that if he could do it with one lung, we'd surely be able to do it with two. And I hope we'll prove the point very soon to British audiences.

"We've now realised that the kids want Marseille to be a total rock band, and we'll play accordingly. In the past, we tried to come up with some songs to please the wider commercial market, ballads and so forth. But no more. We can be a top-selling act as a straight rockin' band, there's no need to introduce Barry Manilow numbers into the set."

If you want proof of this new policy then check out Marseille's soon-due, latest waxing to hit the needle. It's a three-track EP featuring 'Till It's Gone'/'Open Fire'/'We Got Rock 'N' Roll', songs clearly possessing a dangerous edge. It'll be coming out on The Next Record Company label (owned by Nicol), and is a tempting taster of what we can expect in the coming months.

"People haven't forgotten about Marseille," says Buchanan in conclusion. "We've still got a cult following and now we'll have to build on that. There's a war being waged at the moment by all true rock 'n' rollers against calculator music of the sort Teadrop Explodes and Echo & The Bunnymen play. We feel it's about time Marseille got back into the fight."

BOYS FROM THE BLACKSTUFF

(GUINNESS THAT IS)

NEIL JEFFRIES meets MAMA'S BOYS

THOSE WHO have had the good fortune to be in the right place (any date on the Thin Lizzy farewell tour) at the right time (about a-quarter-to-eight) will by now have seen one of the most promising and exciting new bands to have surfaced in a long while . . . opening act the Mama's Boys.

A damn fine live act and a nice bunch of fellas to boot, this young Irish three-piece is just about the most interesting and appropriate crew that could have been chosen to warm-up the Lizzy crowds. Their natural talent is without doubt the result of two unique and distinct factors. Firstly they are three brothers – The McManus Mob if you like – and secondly they are approaching heavy rock from a view-point that could only have come from their musical background. Until four years ago these guys had no idea about any kind of music other than the traditional Irish folk that had been their staple aural diet since birth.

These two conditions have combined to create a very special atmosphere about the Mama's Boys. A certain *chemistry* both on and off the stage. Pat, (guitar and fiddle, aged 23) and John, (bass and vocals, two years his junior) are both more reserved than when out under the lights. Both speak quietly with soft accents and John in particular is less recognisable once he has removed those large mirror-shades that on-stage make him look like a (very) youthful Lemmy!

Drummer Tommy is just sixteen – but sweet he isn't! He's got more energy than a barrel load of monkeys and is just about as mischievous! Fortunately his sense of humour is older than he is so he keeps everyone in good temper on the mini-bus with constant wisecracks and Geoff Banks (for it is he) impressions whilst he looks for the three most important things in life – Kentucky Fried Chicken shops, girls and Rolls-Royces.

Suffice to say any notion of arguments and friction that I wondered about before meeting them is completely groundless. They are an inseparable unit as John explains:

"We have *tried* working with a few other people but it just never

seemed to happen, because when we're rehearsing, the three of us all seem to know what each other is thinking."

Pat: "Our manager Joe reckons there's a secret code between us – he won't speak when we start looking at each other because we can talk, he reckons, with out eyes!"

John: "Joe will suggest something and on the spot the three of us will all . . . (pause for some furtive eyeball-wriggling) . . . and he knows that although he's said, 'I think this is a good idea' we're saying, 'No, it's a dreadful idea!' so he'll refuse to talk about it anymore."

Joe (Wynne) is the ex-Horslips tour manager who has steered them through since they decided to try their hands at the "excitement and power" that they witnessed at their first trip to a rock concert . . . to see The Horslips. They look upon him as far more than a manager though, he is to them just as much a friend and father-figure, without whom they could have made the transition from hornpipes, jigs and reels to powerchords, riffs and solos.

Their total ignorance of the genre at first has been well documented but it's worth a brief re-cap because it's so unprecedented. Up until the Horslips they thought Bert Weedon was far out! (Pat: "If we were looking for screaming guitars – Bert was the guy!") Then gradually, as they started to include Horslips' covers in their pub sets, they would get requests for Rory Gallagher ("Who?") and 'Paranoid' ("What?") – Pat laughs recalling the initial naivety).

They bought records and came to know and love the same bands as you who make up their audience. Just imagine though, the initial gulf that faced them by considering your own reaction to folk music, or opera or even disco!

Remarkable then, that they now perform like seasoned rockers when they've only been at it full time for a couple of years. Watch Pat who now plays electric guitar with a speed and feel that suggests he was born to it. Had he been "cheating" by using previous experience on acoustic folk guitar!?

"Only a *little* bit – I knew about three chords! – but I wasn't really interested in the guitar at all."

He's wonderfully modest about

it all casting aside the fact that the Whitesnake job could have been his before Mel Galley joined as "a nice compliment . . . but I wouldn't have left!" He scoffs at the absurdity of it all and says how he just went on to practice even harder.

Pat reckons that all three of them adapted to the completely new and different instruments so easily because "It was a new challenge – we were getting pretty bored with the Irish thing because there was nothing happening and we'd more or less gone as far as we could."

Fortunately Pat wasn't so bored with the fiddle that he could resist playing it with the Mama's Boys to add extra colour to their sound. Ask anyone who's seen them and it's almost certain that the violin – (made in 1719 by the way, although garish orange paint now hides its origins!) – will be the first thing mentioned. Pat smiles:

"It goes down really well. It's a bit of a novelty but we don't like to go over the top . . . we just do those numbers to get people tapping their feet or whatever because they *will* automatically do that! I would like to involve the fiddle on a more serious basis but being a three-piece it's very hard because when you drop the guitar to pick up the fiddle there's a gap. You have to work very hard."

Then there's the spot at the end of the slow blues number 'Without You' where he puts the two together almost and takes the bow to his Flying 'V'. Yes I know it's been done before but it's still terribly effective . . . and besides Zep-fans and purists, read on to see that it's a long way removed from any kind of plagiarism. Pat again:

"I'd been listening to 'Dazed & Confused' but I never *realised* that Jimmy Page was using a bow – I didn't *know* that! I was saying to myself, 'How the hell does he do that? All those wierd sounds coming out!' Then I just dismissed it completely. Until one night when this guy came up to me and said, 'You play the violin, and the guitar, why don't you do what Jimmy Page does in 'Dazed & Confused'?' and I said, 'What? You're *joking*!' So that's how it came about . . ."

"I didn't sit down and consciously try to rip him off, I didn't want to do that you know. It was really funny because there

it was – the most logical thing in the *world* for me to do – but I've never seen the film so I haven't seen it done."

Since turning fully professional in 1981, Mama's Boys have worked virtually non-stop, clocking up well over 300 gigs each year. They've spent both summers touring their native Emerald Isle, (having just one week off in four months last year!) in between two previous British support slots with Hawkwind then Wishbone Ash. Then they went over to Switzerland and Germany for a holiday . . . but surprise surprise, ended up playing yet more (albeit small-scale) gigs! They really are workaholics!

There's no doubt though that the Thin Lizzy tour is THE most important event in their career to date:

Pat: "This is probably the biggest British tour that will be held this year – we couldn't have asked for better exposure because this is more or less the audience we will be playing to anyhow. It's exactly the tonic we needed because alright, we've made a bit of a stir in London: things have gone pretty well there, but we needed to get the 'stir' elsewhere around Britain."

John: "It's been the most enjoyable tour we've done so far too."

It seems that on the first dates Phil Lynott took them aside and gave them some advice. (Pat: "We really admire him for that . . . advice from a pro. Like him too! – it's well taken you know!") Speaking to various Lizzies it's clear that the headliners have a lot of respect for the trio who incidentally watch the main act every night.

It will certainly prove a first class education and I have no doubt that the Mama's Boys will learn well and then couple it with their total dedication and commitment to further their own careers. They are already looking forward to their first headline tour of Britain in the Autumn:

Pat: "It's up to us now to build on this tour, get into the club circuit and work our butts off . . . pull out all the stops and really prove ourselves!"

With determination and talent as powerful as theirs, it's hard to imagine how they could fail.



Phil Lynott with the McManus brothers, Pat, Tommy and John.

PHÉ DONEAWAY!

HOWARD JOHNSON goes (right) over the top for China Rogue

CHINA ROGUE is a band which will shock, surprise and attempt to seduce you. Whether you will succumb to their very special brand of music will have more to do with your own broadmindedness to accept another 'Glam-look' band rather than their pedigree. For believe you me, China Rogue are special!

At last there is a new, contractless Glam Rock outfit in existence which is 100% convincing! Rock are fine, but ooh those vocals and that production! Wrathchild are game for a laugh but whether they have what it takes to scramble all the way to the top of the ladder is yet to be decided. China Rogue meanwhile have firstly a top class image, a cock-sure stance modelled on those sleazy sirs the New York Dolls!

Secondly, China Rogue have the strongest set of songs of any unsigned band in the UK – no hyperbole I swear! Thirdly, China Rogue are not let down by weak playing or production, this is a professional act! Fourthly, and most importantly, China Rogue have one almighty handful of a vocalist. She is called 'Lucky' Phé Cullen and it is with her arrival Chez les Rogues that we can begin to discuss why this band has the potential to become one of the outfits of the eighties.

Phé Cullen is a lady who doesn't mind jumping into things head first! A native of Toronto, Canada (are you listening Paul Suter?) which explains Phé's marvellously melodic, husky... and yes, erotic vocals, it's a long and curious road which leads from lumberjacks, Anvil and snow-peaked mountains to drab Leicester and its surprisingly pleasant 'Jokers Wine Bar', where we are speaking:

"My mum lives in Scotland" explains Phé "and I came to Glasgow to visit her a couple of years back. I ended up staying and I joined a reggae band up there by the name of 30 Bob Suits which wasn't my scene at all. I really wanted to play heavy music, so I moved down to London where I joined a band by the name of Venigmas as keyboardist. I got tired of that shortly and started to look for opportunities in other bands.

"I saw an advert seeking a male vocalist for a Shock Rock band but I answered the ad anyway. I got an audition and things clicked with China Rogue right away. I had some lyrics which we put to a song immediately and we were on our way!"

Guitarist Sleighmaker (nothing

to do with Santa Claus – rather a guy who apparently influenced the Lizard King himself, Jim Morrison, was the proud owner of this ridiculous moniker!) is quick to approve of the liaison:

"We had a lot of guys auditioning but no-one seemed to fit in with our ideas. When Phé arrived we knew that she was the one. Just look at her – she fits our image perfectly!"

Look at her, I do, more than is healthy for any young man's palpitating heart, but Sleighmaker is correct. Long blonde hair, red leather jacket, chess board style black and white strides and high heeled boots suit the image rather well. It raised the question of whether China Rogue is prepared to exploit Phé's attributes to further their name. Like... er... I guess I would!

Phé: "Having a female vocalist in a UK Hard Rock band is special in itself. There aren't too many girls who do what I do! Funnily enough however, we've never looked at the sexual side of our act. We all have equal status and are simply five musicians. We've never even discussed sexual exploitation and I've never been encouraged to wear mini-skirts or show my tits. I like to look good but then so do all the guys in the band!"

"We're not into sexual exploitation" concludes Sleighmaker. "We're into selling records." And sell records is something which China Rogue have the ability to do – and in considerable quantities. The band's latest four-track demo, featuring 'Dance, Dance', 'Just Another Lonely Night', 'Makin' Trax' and 'Sweet Love' is an absolute Hard Rock stormer for a band without the resources of major label acts. There's balls by the truckload and a sensitivity in the riffs and vocals that you simply do not find on every British corner! A mixture of the Canadian outfit Reckless and the mighty Van Halen is pretty close to the descriptive mark! Frothing at the gills already? I certainly am!

"We all have separate influences and tastes" says Phé. "For example, our bass player (Handsome Dick Anders) really loves Bowie, the New York Dolls, Johnny Thunders and the Dictators while Sleighmaker is more into the Van Halen and Kiss kinda thing. I personally go for the Sagas and Journeys of this world. Overall, I guess we rate Van Halen as our collective favourite. Dave Lee Roth is probably the most visual thing alive!"

Possibly, but I would be tempted to place China Rogue

above VH in the 'I can out-pose anybody, anytime' chart. 'Visually strong' applied to China Rogue is akin to calling a triple Vodka 'quite strong'! What's more, the effect is professional rather than crass to my eyes. Do they get away with it in Leicester? Sleighmaker:

"There have been some people who have been put off by the image but there is a lot of appeal in our music to the average, down-to-earth headbanger. At this stage of our career we intimidate people by our appearance, but if you're as big as Rod Stewart you can walk down the street and look however the hell you want."

Phé: "You need a bit of outrage to succeed but image over music is not the case with this band. We put the music first everytime and in fact it's no problem because we never had to consider an image. We all looked like we do before the band formed."

"I looked for people who wouldn't have to be moulded to fit the image of the band, rather guys who would automatically fit in" adds Sleighmaker.

"When Phé joined all we did was sit in my bedroom with 'Pretty' Steve Kitty for three months solid writing songs – songs which we thought people would want to hear and which would please us as well. We came up with about fifteen catchy, accessible hard pop songs that you can tap your toes to, sing along to and remember for a good while afterwards.

"We wanted that element of commercialism but we retained a real heavy sound." That's exactly what China Rogue offer and it can't be long before some lively A&R man takes notice of such an incredible talent, ready to be picked up and pointed in the right direction. Phé:

"We have been approached by a new London-based label, Precious Records, with a view to recording either an album or a four track 12". It's an independent recording, though distribution and promotion is through CBS, but we're going to wait a while and see what happens, because we haven't had the facilities available as yet to start getting to the majors. That will be happening shortly."

China Rogue is a bona fide top class Hard Rock band, so unusual for new acts in the UK, and I've got a sneaking suspicion that the members of this band will become megastars within five years if given the correct breaks. Forget the Progressive Revival, here lies the next big thing!!



Pic by Ray Palmer

THE BIG 'E'

Keyboard crusader Keith Emerson plots his return. Interview by MALCOLM DOME

"If I had a rotating keyboards stand, then Carl Palmer would insist on having a revolving drum riser, and Greg Lake had to have something as well"



Pic Chuck Pulin

IT'S ODD how you remember some bands for the wierdest of reasons. Mention ELP and I instinctively think of the radio advertisement for their 'Works Vol One' album of 1977...

To the musical background of the trumpet opening from 'Fanfare For The Common Man', Alan 'Fluff' Freeman's expansive voice majestically intones the icon-like names "EMERSON... LAKE... & PALMER." Somehow, this altogether simple 'event' perfectly captured the spirit of ELP – grandiose, overblown hedonism. Or, as Keith Emerson pointed out recently when I met him at his management's offices in deepest Baker Street, "we were seen as THE ultimate capitalists on the music scene."

To me, ELP still represent the long-since mothballed era of early seventies progressive rock. Much of what they did was technically over-elaborate, being both redundant and an extravagant waste of vast sums of money. But there were moments of flashy brilliance (particularly through the albums 'Emerson, Lake & Palmer', 'Tarkus' and 'Brain Salad Surgery'), when their fusion of rock power plus classical manoeuvres bore some spectacular fruits.

And much of what was good about ELP was down to the 'E' – Keith Emerson. Without question

he was, at his peak, the greatest keyboards exponent rock has thrown up, (Jon Lord included) NONE.

Emerson was, I have to admit, my first (and only) rock 'n' roll idol. First with the Nice (the prototypal pop/prog band) and more latterly with ELP, he developed a style and approach that was breathtaking. Whilst eliciting the most excruciating, tacky, yet staggering sounds from his instruments, 'Emmo' would go totally crazy on-stage. Whether it was leaping many feet in the air over keyboards, throwing daggers at them, or rocking them violently on top of himself in a masochistic display of showmanship, he made what had previously been regarded as a fairly staid, background instrument, into a mobile battle-tank. He developed the 'Liberace Principle', giving it meaning to the rock 'n' roll hordes. In short, Emerson was as innovative on keyboards as Hendrix was on guitar.

But what can you do once you've got a reputation as a charismatic originator to maintain? In Keith Emerson's case, it was to move away from the contemporary music scene altogether. When in December 1980, after four creatively bankrupt albums, ELP finally split, the keyboards maestro virtually disappeared.

"I figured I'd sort of done it all in the rock area. I wanted to move

into a new, challenging field. You see, I'd formed the Nice and produced a certain style. Then, when I split them up, along came ELP, which was a similar band but much more successful and featuring better musicians. However, towards the end of ELP, I felt a change starting to come over the music scene. We, as a band, were being encouraged by our record company to make a commercial album so we ended up doing 'Love Beach', which was an embarrassment and didn't represent what we were about.

"Once this had happened, I knew it was time to move on. I'd had a lot of film score offers in the past which, because of band commitments, I just could not accept. But when ELP finished I decided to have a go at that side of things."

Since then, Emerson has had a modest record of success. He worked on the Dario Argento cult horror movie 'Inferno', the Sylvester Stallone film 'Nighthawks' and, most recently, on an animated Japanese cartoon.

However, once you've been bitten by the rock 'n' roll bug, the taste is never removed from the blood. So now, coinciding with the resurgence of 'prog rock' interest (something that has taken him completely by surprise but which he finds "grest news"), the man has moved back permanently too England from

his Nassau home, and plans a return to the limelight.

Yet, he faces one enormous problem – his illustrious past.

"A lot of people have a preconceived idea of what Keith Emerson should sound like. In truth, though, I've moved on from where I was with ELP to a point where I now feel more musically satisfied and fulfilled than I've ever been in the past. With ELP, you see, I could never do exactly what I wanted because of the other two – it was frustrating I can tell you."

"Today I'm a more complete musician, one who exercises more control over his work. For example, I recently got a phone call from a keyboards magazine asking me about an old ELP track. To answer it I had to go back and listen to it for the first time in ages. Boy, did it shock me! It was so schizophrenic, with so many themes chopping and changing. I couldn't believe how untogther it was. These days, I take one idea at a time, and concentrate on developing it the whole way."

But, record companies, in these recession-riddled times, are not quite as prepared to give the new Emerson a chance as they should be. Indeed, in the recent past, he has angrily seen three off-the-wall projects rejected simple because they were slightly different. First off, he cut a cookin' version of 'Sex & Drugs & Rock 'N' Roll', with erstwhile Earthquake vocalist John

Doucas. Then he re-recorded 'America' (one of the Nice's finest numbers), featuring Pat Travers, and finally he assembled a school choir to make an Xmas song. On each occasion, record labels inexplicably ran scared of signing up the finished product – a case of conservatism stampeding through artistic flexibility.

"I feel trapped now, and that makes me angry. Maybe the answer is for me to go under an assumed name. The fact is, money is tight, so most record companies are paranoid about taking risks. And in the end, to get back into the thick of things, I might have to make some concessions towards the music biz and commerciality."

Of course, if Emerson were to 'make concessions' by getting involved in one of the ever-budding number of supergroups (howabout Emerson / Page / Dio / Appice / Lake?), he'd waltz straight into a modest mega-deal. However, this easy option doesn't interest him in the slightest: "I'd find the idea ridiculous."

In a way, this hostile reaction is probably due to his experiences with ELP. After all, they represented the best of the supergroup disease. Never a true band, ELP were a trio of highly-charged, multi-talented, yet ego-burdened musicians, each jealously guarding his own territorial pre-eminence. As Emerson put it: "if I had a rotating keyboards stand, then Carl Palmer would insist on having a revolving drum riser, and Greg Lake had to have something as well." All off which meant that on the rare occasions when they did gell into a harmonious whole, the music was blindly brilliant. But, for the most part, the inner tensions and the suspicion of each other's motives, made this strong-willed, competitive threesome more destructive than consecutive.

The moral of those excessive

times hasn't been lost on Emerson. I'm sure it was a direct result of the burden ELP imposed, that he lost his interest in rock 'n' roll, preferring instead to find a less complicated outlet for his talents, one where he could be accepted as a serious muso not a clown, i.e. film scoring.

Thus, he now returns to the rock scene a wiser, more mature person. And this, in turn, has led him seeking to put together a band of young hopefuls who he can guide in the particular direction he wishes to go.

"I've worked with several good young musicians recently, but to start giving out names would be unfair. My idea is to find people who can contribute to the overall band. But the final say will have to be mine."

"And when we do go out on the road, it won't be with 70-piece orchestras. I'd like to start off on the club circuit, if there's still one left. Sort of getting back to my roots."

That last quote is one of the most warming statements I've heard in a long time. For not only does it mean that Emerson has regained his zest for rock, but also that he returns to the fold in a very sane, down-to-earth frame of mind, something that should make him a viable prospect for any sensible record company, and thereby ensure a whole post-punk generation will be able to enjoy listening to and watching one of the true troupers over the past couple of decades.

Move over Marillion. Make way Pallas, and all you other pretenders to the 'prog' throne, 'cos the king is back!



THE KERRANG! TEAM TELL YOU THE BEST AND WORST WAY OF GETTING SQUARE EYES

RAINBOW: 'Straight Between The Eyes Live' (DDA Videos)

With the video age well and truly upon us we find ourselves now confronted with a tasty selection of A-1 music tapes (one waits in trepidation for a deluge of bootlegs that lurk around some crooked corner) and here, surprisingly enough, amongst the for-runners is a bona fide Rainbow tape catching the band midway through an American tour.

The reason for this hack's astonishment at the release of this gem is due to Blackmore's renowned reticence towards any form of contact with a camera lens, one only has to recall the California Jam where some TV cameras came in for the full wrath from the man in black's Stratocaster neck. Recently, though, he seems to have contradicted his mean, moody persona by being unusually co-operative as demonstrated here where the video team manage to capture the full dynamics, histrionics and general flavour of a Rainbow show, with plenty of close up shots of Blackmore in raving form, and remain intact which is quite an achievement in itself.

Apart from some specially put together footage for the intro the rest is essentially the show as witnessed by the San Antonio audience that night. No smart edits and not too much juggling with sound as one might normally expect; this is the real, raw and live stuff – as it happened, and until we've got 3D perfected this is the closest you'll get to seeing Blackmore and his merry mayhem inducing cohorts in the comfort of your living room.

My video doesn't possess the stereo facilities necessary to hear the full potential of the recording and to be honest I prefer a direct 'straight between the ears' mono sound. Kicking off with 'Spotlight Kid' and culminating with an axe splintering rendition of 'Smoke On The Water' amongst the 1,001 reasons that make this an imperative purchase is that although you've probably seen the group live I doubt that you'll ever get such a grandstand panoramic view of Blackmore and his theatrics – the various gestures and cues for the rest of the group to follow. The cameras have obviously been given full access of the stage area and they certainly make good use of this privilege.

The main success of this whole affair is that it's actually impressed and interested people I know who prior to seeing it wouldn't have dreamed of putting a Rainbow record on their deck. Since having a vid of this I know there'll be lots of new faces the next time Rainbow tour England (an event that is long overdue). The band live and on vinyl are situations worlds apart due to commercial pressures and their artistic integrities being held hostage by the ever growing menace of American AOR radio. This video encapsulates a happy medium of both facets and successfully – check it out.

PETE MAKOWSKI

MOTORHEAD: 'Motorhead' (Polygram)

You'd have thought that someone would have had the good sense a long time ago to put out a live Motorhead video. But no, it's taken an awfully lengthy period to happen.

And, here we have the glorious results – er, well, here we have the results anyway. For a kick-off, this isn't live at all. Rather in the tradition of the TV sit-coms the band have been shot (not between the eyes, I hasten to add) in the studio and a canned audience dubbed onto the soundtrack. So, before anything else is considered, this must be put down as a sham. On top of this, the lads aren't even playing the songs herein. They've been reduced to ventriloquist dummies, miming to album versions of such classics as 'Overkill', 'Stay Clean', 'No Class', 'Bomber', and 'Ace Of Spades' (wot no 'Motorhead'? Yeah, no 'Motorhead'). And very embarrassed they look about the whole damn thing as well! Mind you, I can't blame 'em – how would you look when reduced to Lord Charles proportions?

So, is this worth buying? I'm afraid not. The camera angles are rather twee, the colour effects minimal, and in the final analysis, why the 'eck did Motorhead go to all the trouble to try and mimic a live show, when it would have been far easier, and more interesting, to go for the real thing?

MALCOLM DOME

'EVIL DEAD' (X)

With: Bruce Campbell, Sarah York, Betsy Baker.

Dir: Sam Raimi (Also available on videocassette: Palace Video)

Given its licence to thrill by no less than master of terror Stephen King, 'Evil Dead' is a remarkable first feature from a director just turned twenty. But then what else could you expect from a citizen of Detroit, former Murder Capital USA (Miami's since taken that particular honour over) and breeding ground of such crazies as Iggy Pop and Ted Nugent. Nothing new plot-wise: bunch of students rent a house in a remote forest, move in... and then the screaming starts. Seems the previous tenants were rather fond of the old witchcraft and so, before you can say AAARGGHH! there's a thunderstorm, weird lights in the woods, even sexually inclined bushes!

One by one the kids are possessed, turning on their former buddies with drooling jaws, pop-up eyeballs and plenty of bloodlust. The normals fight back with anything and everything; the zombies get hacked, shot, crushed, stomped – you name it, they get it. Still they come back for more, getting uglier and bloodier by the minute. Sounds old hat but, by golly, it's a brand new setson.

The movie grabs you by the throat right from the start, dragging you helpless by the heels thanks to smart editing and Tom Sullivan's wizard (of gore) special effects. The squeamish won't like this at all, but the screamish will lap up every ketchup-sodden second. No mistake, this is an over the top classic fit to rank with 'Texas Chainsaw Massacre', 'The Hills Have Eyes', 'Phantasm', 'Dawn Of The Dead' and 'Motel Hell'. Dig it up!

GIOVANNI DADOMO



HEAVY LOAD



"What we're about as a band is reviving the Viking spirit that's so much a part of our tradition."

THE BEAST ON THE WOAD

Swedish 'pillage and be damned' merchants HEAVY LOAD are hoping to break out the longboats before long. MALCOLM DOME prepares to insert his oar.

"MY WORDS burn like flame in the darkness. I speak and hearts beat high, swords warm to the hand; under my spell boys become men." ('The Silver Arm' by Jim Fitzpatrick).

THERE'S NOTHING subtle about the musical attack of Heavy Load. This is crude Metal. Compare them to, say The Rods, and the difference is as of that between the sharpened scalpel of a precision surgeon, and the cracking axe blade of an abattoir slaughterhouseman. When Heavy Load crank up the volume, the effect is rather like facing up to a stampeding herd of shoppers during Harrods sale – the initial effect is rather more startling than the final impact.

Heavy Load are a quartet of volatile Vikings, Swedes whose musical endeavours stem primarily from the mythological traditions of their native homeland. The tales of gore 'n' glory as Thor, Odin and other Norse legends rode the wind, wielding mighty axes, hammers and anything else they could lay their hands on, are amply reflected in the songs featured on both 'Metal Conquest' (the band's '81 five-track mini-LP), and 'Death Or Glory' (last year's full-blown legitimate album). Cuts such as 'Bleeding Streets', 'Might For Right', 'The Guitar Is My Sword', and 'Heavy Metal Angles' bring to mind the barbaric philosophy of 'pillage and be damned'.

"We have the power, oh, of thunder, Our music is made of steel, You and I can change the world, Together we can reach the sky." ('HM Angles')

But, if the above rant 'n' rhetoric sounds like the beginnings of a slag-off, then forget it. I've more than a little time for these conquistadors of craziness. Thus far along the line, Sweden has

become notorious in modern times for Borg, Abba and Saab, three machines dedicated to the fine art of winning, with scarcely a human touch between 'em. Heavy Load, for all their simple-minded savagery, at least possess a morsel of emotion and are far away the best hard rockin' combo I've yet heard from Sweden. Whilst the likes of 220 Volt and High Level are real barrel-bottom fodder, and the EF Band make no more than a half-hearted attempt to copy AOR-tists like Journey, the Loaders have the raw material to make a very significant impact, boasting as they do a style and sound on the concrete side of early Priest/Maiden.

But enough of this mega-tweeting. Who, you would doubtless like to know, are Heavy Load anyway?

"The first line-up came together in 1977," explained Ragne Wahlquist (guitar/vocals) recently on the hot-line from Stockholm, in surprisingly good English. "I got the band off the ground with my little brother Styrbjorn, who plays drums. We are the only two guys from the original Heavy Load still in the band. And at first, we were just a trio, with a bassist called Dom Molem making up the numbers."

This Heavy Load Mk 1 actually recorded an album as far back as 1978, the now-obscure 'Full Speed At High Level', by no means a platinum chart-topper.

"Unfortunately, the distribution company in Sweden who were handling it went bust within two months of the LP coming out, so consequently it didn't sell very well."

But, undaunted by such vinyl atrocities, Load did take to the road in their home territory during '78, adding a second guitarist in one Kant Kroup (who has played with Jan Akkermann). However, within six months, the entire band was thrown into disarray, with both

Kroup and Molem leaving almost simultaneously.

"The bass guitarist left because he had a baby (*are you sure about this!-Ed.*), whilst the guitarist couldn't take the pressure on the road."

So, was this to be the end of the line for Heavy Load? Could they survive such tragic occurrences? Stay tuned to this channel for more from your fave 'soap opera'. Within a short space of time, Torbjorn Rogesjo (a cousin of the Wahlquist duo) had been co-opted on bass, and Eddy Malm brought in to complete the Mk 3 look on second guitar. That was in the autumn of '79, since which time things have moved if not at a cracking pace, then certainly in a high-speed crawl. 'Metal Conquest' established the band as undoubtedly the best new chrom-plated combo in Sweden, whilst 'Death Or Glory' achieved a notable first.

"It was the very first LP from a home-grown band to make it into the Swedish national charts. In fact, no Scandinavian HM band has done something like this before. We've so far sold about 10,000 copies, which is pretty good for a country of only eight million people."

"At present Heavy Metal in Sweden is very well followed. When 'Full Speed At High Level' came out, we were the only band of that type around. But now a lot of others have begun to emerge. The interest is bigger now than it's ever been. Everywhere you go, there are people dressed up in leather and chains. Just why it's taken so long for Swedish fans to accept music of the sort we play, I don't know – I'm just glad there are so many HM freaks to buy out albums!"

The main query now is can Heavy Load use such interest as a launching pad for major international success?

"Well, we're getting a very good

response to the album from all over the world. I've had people in Japan, Germany and Austria ringing me recently asking if they can release the LP, and we've picked up a great response in England as well.

"What we'd like to do now is play some major gigs across Europe. Bullet Records, who distribute out stuff in England, are trying to arrange for us to come over during the summer, maybe to play some festivals. But, what I'd like to do is set up a double-act bill with a British band like, say, Raven. My idea would be for us to use our Swedish contacts to get some good gigs here, and for the English band to do the same there. In both countries, each group would get equal billing, and the same conditions for playing. I'm serious about this proposal, and anyone who wants to take me up on it is very welcome to do so."

"We're also on the look-out for an English manager, as we feel having someone good there, working on our behalf is vital to the band's development. We've got one American manager whose talking to us about taking on representation in the States, but he feels our material isn't commercial enough as yet for that market. But we're not about to compromise our style just to please him – we make heavy music, not hip music!"

"Heavy Load has also had a lot of offers from major bands. For instance, we were asked to support UFO on the forthcoming British tour. But we didn't really have the money to spend on such a commitment, plus we felt that as this didn't look like being a very successful tour we'd be wiser using what money we have in better ways. Saxon asked us to play with them in Sweden not so long ago, and we'd have done that one. But they wouldn't allow us to use our own sound engineer, so we blew them out. Another Swedish

group, the EF Band, ended up doing those gigs."

On a more positive note, HL are now confirmed as the support band to Iron Maiden when the latter hit Scandinavia in June, and the Swedes will also be headlining a large festival on their home territory in May.

"We've also just completed a seven-track video, which we hope will be released soon. It's gonna be called 'Heavy Load Live', although there was no audience present. Already one number has appeared on Italian TV, and we hope it'll open up fresh markets for us. And, of course, we're constantly working on new material. I've just finished writing a song called 'Try Hard', which is a little more commercial than anything we've done before, whilst Styrbjorn has a new song called 'Big Bad City' ready to be recorded."

"What we're about as a band is reviving the Viking spirit that's so much a part of our tradition. We use it as a way of expressing out thoughts and feelings. Hopefully, others can relate to them, and understand what Heavy Load is trying to say in the music."

So, what with Manowar's 'black wind', and Heavy Load's 'Viking fury', it looks as if Heavy Metal is rapidly becoming the only medium for the modern-day barbarian. If you fancy yourself strolling down the local high-street, shopping bag in one hand and broadsword in the other, terrorising frequenters of the local library, then Heavy Load are definitely up your alley. If not, go cower behind those Toto albums, cos Ragne and his cohorts are out to get ya!

DEE SNIDER (*Twisted Sister*)

WHEN ATLANTIC Records executive Phil Carson accompanied Foreigner's Mick Jones to the filming of Channel Four's 'Tube' programme shortly before Christmas, he bumped into the outrageous Twisted Sister, who were also appearing on the show, and was so impressed by the antics of Snider's gang that he decided to sign them up.

Consequently, the New York rockers have been busying themselves down at Jimmy Page's Berkshire studios recording their debut LP for the label. The album's produced by Stuart Epps, who also twiddled knobs for Vandenberg, and by the time you're reading this a single entitled 'I Am (I'm Me)' should already be in the stores.

Incidentally, the B-side of the seven-inch version of 'I Am' will feature a live cut from Sister's recent Marquee shows, while the twelve-incher is set to include two or three live tracks, incorporating one of Dee Snider's legendary 'gross' raps.

